



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

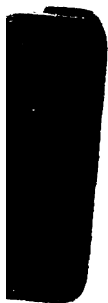
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

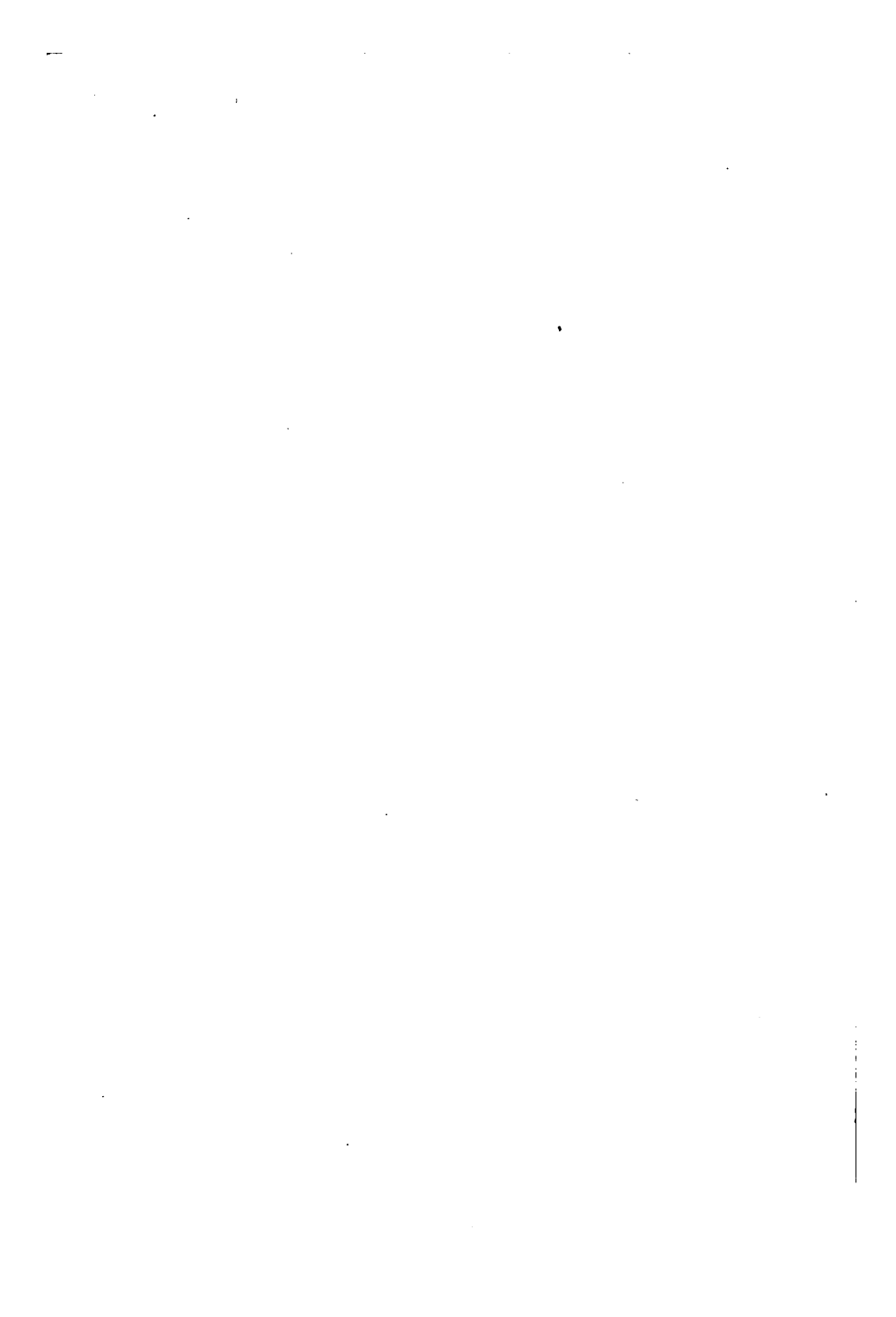
We also ask that you:

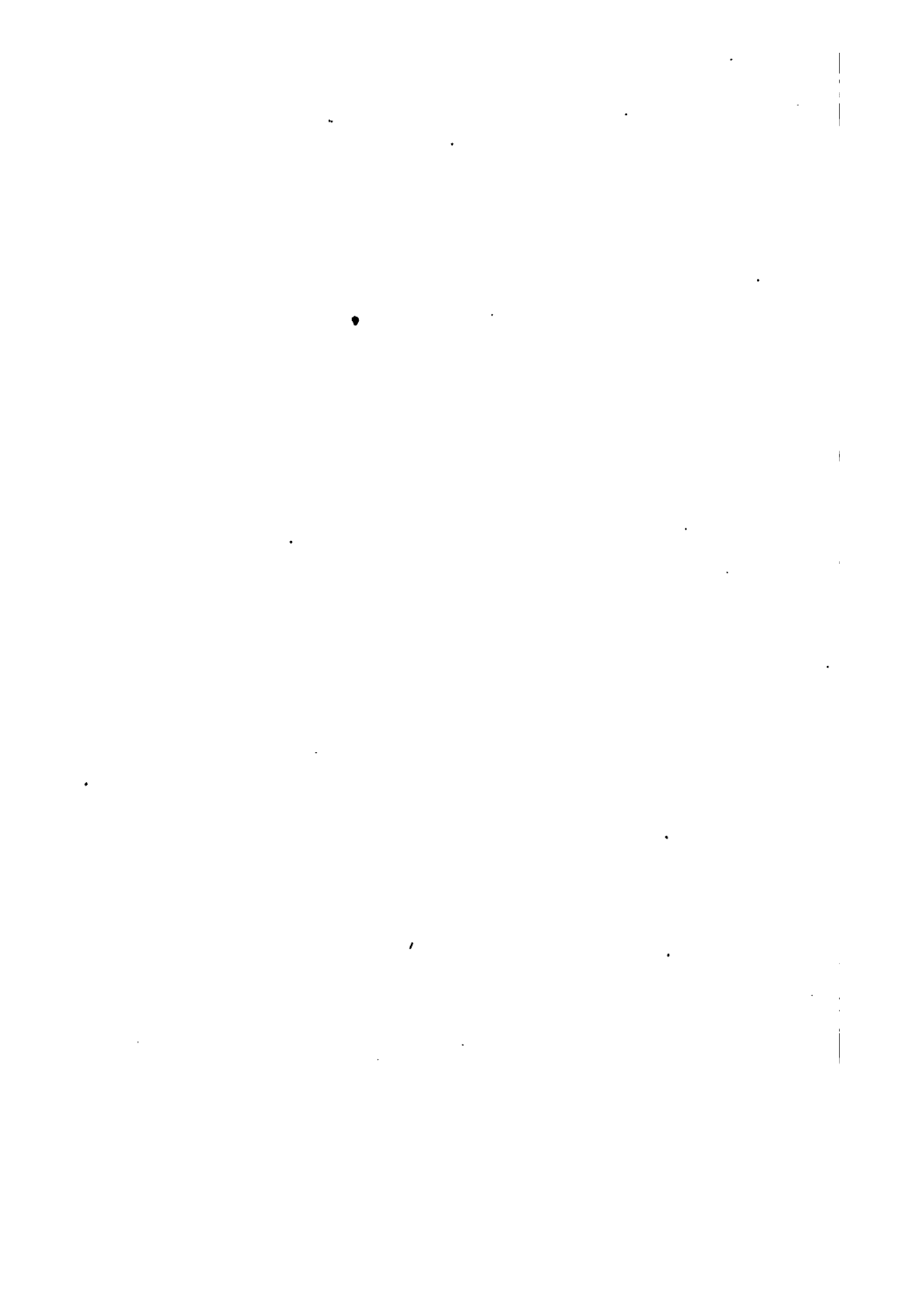
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>







Notes of Lessons
ON
ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.

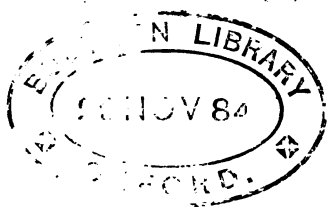
BY
G. MARTIN TAIT.



London :
CHURCH OF ENGLAND SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTITUTE,
SERJEANTS' INN, FLEET STREET, E.C.

1884

1016.e.26.



LONDON:
PRINTED BY JAS. TRUSCOTT AND SON,
Suffolk Lane, City

CONTENTS.

LESSON.	PAGE
I. BIRTH OF CHRIST	1
II. VISIT OF THE WISE MEN	4
III. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS.....	8
IV. THE TEMPTATION.....	11
V. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.....	14
VI. THE LORD'S PRAYER.....	18
VII. THE SURE FOUNDATION	22
VIII. THE CENTURION AND HIS SERVANT.....	25
IX. THE SICK WOMAN AND JAIRUS' DAUGHTER	28
X. MISSION WORK	31
XI. JOHN BAPTIST: HIS LIFE.....	34
XII. THE SABBATH	37
XIII. THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER	40
XIV. JOHN BAPTIST: HIS DEATH.....	43
XV. THE TRANSFIGURATION.....	46
XVI. THE LOST SHEEP	49
XVII. THE RICH YOUNG RULER	53
XVIII. LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD	56
XIX. THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM	60
XX. THE MARRIAGE FEAST.....	63
XXI. THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.....	66
XXII. THE SECOND COMING.....	69
XXIII. THE TEN VIRGINS.....	72
XXIV. THE LAST SUPPER	75
XXV. DEATH: THE CRUCIFIXION	78
XXVI. LIFE: THE RESURRECTION	81

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

Lessons.—The Lessons are *graduated*, with an adaptation to Senior and Junior Classes, the larger and smaller types being used so as, at once, to catch the eye. Where the small type *only* is used, as in some of the later Lessons, the quantity of matter was found too great for the limited space allotted to each Lesson.

Reading.—Portions of Scripture for Daily Reading are selected to encourage the regular reading of God's Holy Word amongst the young.

The example of a Teacher reading the same daily portion as the Scholars, may, with God's blessing, be found very helpful.

Method.—Much depends on the method of opening any Lesson, both in *securing attention*, and *success* in teaching. For instance, the first Lesson has its chief point in the opening question—"Who was Christ?" To ask for an immediate answer would cause failure in the Method; but if the Teacher begins somewhat in this manner:—"Now, dear children, I am going to ask you a very important question, one which our Lord Himself asked. Let us see what St. Peter answered," &c., and go on to find out what St. Matthew, St. Luke, and St. John said; attention will then be secured and interest may be aroused.

Sketch Lessons.—The Notes are supplemented by the addition of a series of Specimen Sketch Lessons and a few Hints on Methods of Teaching. *Method* is really of the greatest importance in teaching. Most Teachers have a tolerable knowledge of Scripture, but few know sufficiently well how to impart it. It is the aim of these Sketch Lessons to assist the Teacher in this direction.

St. Matthew's Gospel.

NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 1.

Subject: BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Daily Portions of Illustrative Reading for Teachers and Scholars.	Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.
ST. MATTHEW. SUNDAY ... ch. 1. 1-17	JEWISH TESTIMONY. Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call Him a man, for He was a doer of wonderful works—a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to Him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was (the) Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned Him to the Cross (A.D. 33, April 8rd), those that loved Him at the first did not forsake Him, for He appeared to them alive again the third day, as the Divine Prophet had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning Him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from Him, are not extinct at this day. — <i>Josephus</i>. (<i>Antiq.</i>, xviii. 3.)
MONDAY ... " 18-25 ST. LUKE. TUESDAY ... ch. 2. 1-7	THE MAJESTY OF CHRIST. There is a Being in Whose breath lives the whole immensity of worlds, Who with the faintest wish could blot them all from existence, and Who after they had all vanished away like a dream would remain filling the whole tremendous solitude they left. Hear His voice attesting His own eternal sovereignty: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." But who is He that thus builds the throne of His glory upon the ruins of earth and heaven; who is He that thus triumphs over a perishing universe, Himself alone eternal and impassible? The child of a Jewish woman. He who was laid in a manger, because there was no room for Him in the inn at Bethlehem!—<i>Rev. W. A. Butler</i>.
WEDNESDAY... " 8-20	ANCIENT CHRISTMAS CAROL. "Shepherds lay afield that night to keep their fleece sheep; Hosts of Angels in their sight came down from Heaven's steep. Tidings unto you! To you a child is born, Purer than the drops of dew, and brighter than the morn."
THURSDAY ... ch. 2. 1-9 HAGGAI.	
FRIDAY ... ch. 7. 10-16 ISAIAH.	
SATURDAY ... ch. 9. 1-7	

Subject: BIRTH OF CHRIST.

(ST. MATTHEW 1. 1-25.)

Learn—St. Luke, ch. 2. ver. 14.

~~~~~

- BRIEF SUMMARY. { I.—Who was Christ?  
II.—Prophecies concerning His Birth.  
III.—The Circumstances attending His Birth.  
IV.—Why was Christ Born?

---

INTRODUCTION.—St. Matthew's Gospel is universally admitted to be the earliest history of our Lord, written about the year A.D. 42,\* although some fix it so late as A.D. 69. It was intended primarily for the Jews to prove that Jesus was the Messiah. Many Jewish customs are not explained, but assumed to be understood by those to whom St. Matthew wrote; the Old Testament is frequently quoted, and the genealogy of our Lord is given, tracing His descent from Abraham, and occupying a position of great prominence in the Gospel. These are some of the reasons assigned for the statement that this Gospel was, in the first instance, written by St. Matthew for his own nation.

\* Oxford Bible notes.

---

I.—Who was Christ?

1. Our Lord asked a similar question—"Whom do men say that I am?" See Peter's answer (St. Mark 8. 27-29).
2. St. Matthew thinks the question important, for in ch. 1. he traces the genealogy of Jesus, as the Son of David and Abraham.
3. St. Luke also in ch. 3. ver. 38, extends the family roll upwards to Adam, "which was the Son of God."
4. St. John (ch. 1.) calls Christ by other names—the *Word*, the *Light*, and explains that this *Christ* was the *Son of God*.

It was to convince the Jews of the truth, that Christ was the true Messiah, and to show forth the character of His Kingdom, that St. Matthew especially wrote his Gospel.—(See *Additional Note*.)

*Note 1.*—This question teaches at once, as the first step in Scripture truth, the doctrine of the Trinity—a mystery, but to be received and believed by God's faithful people. Compare St. Matt. 28. 19, 2 Cor. 13. 14, and Ex. 20. 1-5, Deut. 6. 4, and 1 Cor. 8. 4. It is

II.—Prophecies concerning His Birth.

1. In Eden.—Immediately after the fall (Gen. 3. 15) a child to be born which should bruise the serpent's head.—(See *Daily Portion*, Isa. 9.)
2. To Abraham.—A child to be born, and all the nations of the earth to be blessed (Gen. 12. 2, 3; 22. 18).
3. To Judah.—The time of His coming mentioned Gen. 49. 10.
4. Also foretold by Prophets and Kings; Moses (Deut. 18. 15); David (Ps. 2. 6); Isaiah (7. 14; 9. 6; 55.).

*Note 2.*—In Gal. 4. 4 it is said God sent forth His Son in "the fulness of time." Just 4,000 years had passed since the fall—the sceptre had departed from Judah—Roman power all over the world—one official language known—the Jews were looking for a king—nations and people were expecting some great event (see *next Lesson*)—hence the world seemed prepared more than at any other time for the coming of our Lord.

## No. 1.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### III.—Circumstances attending His Birth.

#### 1. Human Parentage. (Read ver. 18-25.)

(1.) Joseph and Mary, both of royal lineage—of the house of David—yet poor, Joseph, a carpenter (St. Matt. 18. 55), and somewhat looked down on in consequence.

(2.) The Child is of the Holy Ghost—is the Son of God. An Angel appears to Joseph to guide and settle his mind about Mary (ver. 18-20). Joseph not yet married to Mary—"espoused," that is betrothed or engaged.

(3.) HIS NAME.—"Jesus, Saviour (ver. 21), for He shall save His people from their sins" (See St. Luke 2. 21), given at circumcision, just as names now are given to children at baptism.—(See *Daily Portion*, Isa. 7.)

#### 2. Place of Birth.

(1.) Bethlehem (ch. 2. ver. 1), their hereditary home, in which, 1,000 years before, Boaz and Jesse and David had lived.

(2.) The Romans had ordered all the world to be taxed or numbered (St. Luke 2. 1-5); and the Jewish law required each to be enrolled in his ancestral city.

(3.) THE STORY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH. Refer briefly to the description by St. Luke. (*Farrar* thinks the story there told is in the words of Mary.) Inn full of visitors—Jesus born in stable and laid in manger—Jesus' birth-place. So from His birth our

Lord taught that the soul of the greatest monarch was no dearer or greater in God's sight than the soul of his meanest slave.—(Refer to *Josephus*, as to the fact of Jesus' birth, and the great impression created on the Jewish mind by His life.)

### IV.—Why was Christ Born?

*Review Lesson thus:* We have seen that Jesus was the Son of God—that prophets, priests, and kings foretold His coming—that He laid aside His glory (Isa. 6. 1-6) and became a child—Why then was Christ Born?

1. To redeem a lost world (1 John 8. 5-8).

2. To give His life for us, and make known the love of God the Father in Christ Jesus, our Lord (John 8. 16).—(Refer to "*Majesty of Christ*," Butler.

3. To set us an example (Heb. 10. 7, and 1 Pet. 2. 21).

### APPLICATION.

(1.) As Jesus died for us, and bought us with His own precious blood (1 Cor. 6. 20, and 7. 23), we truly belong to Him.

(2.) We are not our own, but bought with a price (1 Pet. 1. 18, 19).

(3.) Should we not then render Him hearty thanks for His mercy and goodness, and as the Catechism says, Seek to "Worship Him, serve Him, and obey Him, as we ought to do."

### Additional Note on St. Matthew's Gospel from *Helps to the Study of the Bible.* (Oxford).

The true character of the Messiah is attested:—

1. By His lineal descent and Divine revelation of His birth (1-4).
2. By the manifestation of His triple office (Prophet, Priest, and King), in conflict with the popular ideas (5-16).
3. By unfolding the true nature of His Kingdom and its future history, in contrast with that of the ancient world (16-20).

4. By His self-sacrifice and humiliation (21-24).
5. By prophetic revelations of the judgment of the Jewish nation, and of the world (24, 25).
6. By His sacerdotal presentation of Himself as the atoning sacrifice (26, 27).
7. By His glorification at the right hand of power (28).

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 2.

### Subject: THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>MATTHEW.</b>                                                         | <b>THE WISE MEN.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| SUNDAY ... ch. 2. 1-12                                                  | There was a double tradition as to their number. Augustine and Chrysostom say that there were twelve; but the common belief—arising, perhaps, from the triple gifts—is that they were three in number. The Venerable Bede even gives us their names, their country, and their appearance. Melchior was an old man, with white hair and long beard; Caspar, a ruddy and beardless youth; Balthasar, swarthy and in the prime of life. We are further informed by tradition that Melchior was a descendant of Shem, Caspar of Ham, and Balthasar of Japheth. Thus they are made representatives of the three periods of life, and the three divisions of the globe. ( <i>See Farrar's "Life of Christ,"</i> vol. i., p. 27.) |
| MONDAY ... " 18-18                                                      | <b>NEGLECTED OPPORTUNITIES.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| TUESDAY ... " 19-28                                                     | It is not always those who have most religious privileges who give Christ most honour. We might have thought that the Scribes and Pharisees would have been the first to hasten to Bethlehem, on the slightest rumour that the Saviour was born. A few unknown strangers from a distant land were the first, except the shepherds, to rejoice at His birth. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (John 1. 11). What a mournful picture this of human nature! How often the very persons who live nearest to the means of Grace are those who neglect them most!— <i>Bishop Ryle.</i>                                                                                                                       |
| <b>ISAIAH.</b>                                                          | <b>HYMN.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| WEDNESDAY... ch. 60. 1-7                                                | Brightest and best of the sons of the morning!<br>Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;<br>Star of the East! the horizon adorning!<br>Guide where our Infant Redeemer is laid.<br><i>Bishop Heber.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| THURSDAY ... " 8-14                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| FRIDAY ... " 15-22                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>MICAH.</b>                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| SATURDAY ... ch. 5. 1-3                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## No. 2.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### Subject: VISIT OF THE WISE MEN.

(ST. MATTHEW 2, 1-12.)

Learn—Hosea, ch. 6. ver. 3.

- BRIEF SUMMARY. { I.—Who were the Wise Men?  
II.—How and from whence came they?  
III.—Why they came.  
IV.—Their return to the East.

INTRODUCTION.—In previous Lesson it was said that all nations, at the time when our Lord Jesus Christ was born, were looking for some great event to happen in the world.

St. Matthew, in chapter 2, proceeds to give an illustration of this in the story of the Visit of the Wise Men to Bethlehem.

#### I.—Who were the Wise Men?

(Read ver. 1.)

Called, in their own country, "magi," learned men—probably belonging to the order of priests—accustomed to observe the stars and heavenly bodies.

England has its Astronomer Royal—a very learned man, who acquaints the country about the stars, comets, &c., and who tells the correct Greenwich time, and many other useful and learned things.

The Wise Men may have held an office of similar use in their country.

(Teach Lesson 3 here.)

#### II.—How and from whence came they? (Ver. 1.)

1. Their Country.—They came from the East. The East to us, now, is taken to mean Egypt, or India, or China, or Japan.

The East, in the time when our Lord was born, meant the land from which Abraham came, or where Daniel was captive, where Nebuchadnezzar was king, and the Jews were in bondage and captivity.

Very familiar to the mind of the Jew was the East!

2. Their Journey: From the East to Jerusalem, and thence to Bethlehem. If from Babylon or Nineveh, it was more than 600 miles, in direct line, over desert and dangerous country; with no public conveyance such as travellers now can have in almost all countries, except this very one of which the Lesson speaks.

This journey illustrates the patient *endurance*, *self-denial*, and *faith* in God, such as is shown now by our brave Missionaries going to strange and foreign lands on their Gospel errand.

*Illustrations:* Rev. Henry Martin, Bishop Patteson, Mrs. Hinderer, &c.

3. Their Guide: The Star in the East.—(See Daily Portion, Isa. 60.)

Balaam speaks of this Star (Num. 24. 17).

Daniel tells the time of the Saviour's coming (Dan. 9. 25-27).

This Star the Wise Men saw in the West, and it guided them to Jerusalem—whether it moved before them, like the Pillar of Cloud before the Israelites, we cannot tell. On the journey from Jerusalem to Bethlehem it appears to have done so, and stood over where the young child was (ver. 9, 10).

(Teach Lesson 4 here.)

## No. 2.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### III.—Why the Wise Men came from the East.

1. To seek Jesus.—Born King of the Jews (ver. 2).

Made inquiries at Jerusalem, the chief city of the Land, where King Herod lived.

All Jerusalem troubled (ver. 3).

Chief Priests questioned (ver. 4).

Scriptures consulted (Micah 5. 2).

Herod's command (ver. 7, 8).

2. To worship Him: (ver. 2 and 11).

The Wise Men now journey to Bethlehem.— (*See Daily Portion*, Micah 5. 1-3.)

The Star again guides their steps. The child is found. *But*, how unlike a king! (ver. 11.)

The child and His mother Mary in a stable—no pomp or splendour there (St. Luke 2. 7).

Their faith must have been tried, yet they bow before Him and present their gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh (ver. 11). Gave their best gifts to Christ, and so ought we.

(*Teach Lesson 1 here.*)

### IV.—Their return to the East.

Verse 12: warned of God, they departed to their own country another way, carrying the good news to Gentiles.

(*Teach Lesson 2 here.*)

Joseph directed to fly into Egypt with Mary and the child, where they remained until Herod's death (ver. 13).

Herod in great rage (ver. 16) slew all the young children from two years old and under.

(*Teach Lesson 5 here.*)

*NOTE.*—(1) *Teachers of Junior Classes may omit the portions printed in small type.* (2) *It is not intended that all the suggested Lessons be taught to any Class on one occasion; a selection should be made suited to the capacity of the scholars.*

## Lessons

### We may learn from this remarkable Story—

1. That again God's Word teaches the Divinity of Our Lord—*The Wise Men worship Him*—that is adore *Him* (ver. 2-11)—and therein show a marvellous faith.

2. That He was to be a *Light to lighten the Gentiles*. (See Church Service, Simeon's Prayer, also Ps. 2. 8; Isa. 49. 6, and Isa. 60. 3.) God's blessing for all, first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles—the shepherds first, and then the Wise Men brought to Jesus. This was the first Epiphany.

3. That God deals with men very much in the way that appeals to their experience in their daily walk—the Wise Men learned in stars, now are guided by a Star—Peter the fisherman is to become a fisher of men—Matthew devoted to his official calling, called to follow Christ. Children who love and trust fathers and mothers, are to come to Jesus in same way (Ps. 40. 4; St. Matt. 19. 14).

4. That to every one who diligently seeks Jesus—a star to guide, some *circumstances* of life, may serve to point the way to Christ (St. John 4. 7).— (*See Anecdote, next page.*)

5. Also to those who seek Christ there is given an outward sign like the Star of old to *guide*—the Bible (Ps. 119. 105): and an inward warning (ver. 12, 13), even His Holy Spirit to *lead* His people (St. John 16. 13).

6. That we must not allow outward appearances to dim our faith in Christ—He was found in stable, and so may be found now in the humblest house as well as the richest palace (Acts 16. 30; Phil. 1. 13).

## No. 2.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### SPECIMEN SKETCH LESSON.

(FOR AN INFANT CLASS.)

#### 1. The Wise Men.

*Their Journey*—the East to Jerusalem—more than 500 miles.  
*Their Guide*—a little star.

#### 2. Why did they travel so far?

To see Jesus.  
To worship Him.

#### 3. Whom did they see?

Herod.  
The Chief Priests.  
Joseph and Mary.  
**JESUS.**

#### 4. How did they show their Faith?

They listened to God's Word.  
They obeyed God and not Herod.  
They worshipped Jesus.

#### 5. Can we be wise like them?

*Yes*—  
By reading and loving God's Word.  
By obeying its teaching.  
By seeking *Jesus*.  
By finding *Jesus*.  
By worshipping *Jesus*.  
By giving our best gifts—our heart, our love,—to Him.

### METHOD.

(HINTS AS TO TEACHING A LARGE INFANT CLASS IN SEPARATE ROOM.)

(*Learn or Repeat Text.*)

#### 1. Lesson:

Picture the Land of the East, Persia, the dress of the people, the camels, the great heat, the sand of the deserts, wild animals, &c.

#### 2. Read passage about Wise Men (ver. 1-12).

Again picture long journey, and how guided to Jerusalem, and whom the Wise Men saw.

Hymn.—“Brightest and best,” &c.  
(*Stand and Sing.*)

#### 3. Simultaneously question out so far in Lesson.

Continue the story; 6 miles yet to travel to Bethlehem—the scene there in David's City.

Tell something about the Home of Boaz, or Ruth, or David, 1,000 years before.

#### 4. Review Lesson, elliptically.

#### 5. Questions.—Ask for individual answers, as to 4 and 5 heads of Sketch, so as to apply one thought—“Can I be wise and truly love Jesus?”—“His Holy Spirit will teach how.” (St. John 16. 13.)

### ANECDOTE.

WHEN Mungo Park was travelling in Africa, he was seized by banditti, plundered, and left almost destitute of clothing. In this situation he looked around him with amazement and horror. In the midst of a vast wilderness, in the depth of the rainy season; naked and alone; surrounded by savage animals, and men still more savage; five hundred miles from the nearest European settlement; no wonder that his spirits began to fail him.

“At this moment,” says he, “the extraordinary beauty of a small moss, in fructification, irresistibly caught my eye. I could not contemplate the delicate conformation of its roots, leaves, and capsula without admiration. Can that Being, thought I, who planted, watered, and brought to perfection, in this obscure part of the world, a thing which appears of such small importance, look with unconcern on the situation and sufferings of creatures formed after His own image? Surely not! Reflections like these would not allow me to despair. I started up, and disregarding both hunger and fatigue, travelled forwards, assured that relief was at hand, and I was not disappointed.”

The above is an illustration of the way in which Teachers may use the Lessons in private preparation.

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 3.

### Subject: THE BAPTISM OF JESUS.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>ST. MATTHEW.</p>                                                     | <p>JOHN'S RITE OF BAPTISM.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <p>SUNDAY ... ch. 8. 1-12</p>                                           | <p>John was a good man, and urged the Jews who were willing to live worthily, and to show uprightness one to another, and piety towards God, to be baptized. For baptism was approved of by him, not as a means of obtaining pardon for some sins only, but for the purity of the whole body, when the soul had been cleansed beforehand by righteousness.—<i>Josephus.</i></p> |
| <p>MONDAY ... „ 13-17</p>                                               | <p>PARADISE REGAINED.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p>ST. MARK.</p>                                                        | <p>Now had the great proclaimer, with a voice More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand,</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <p>TUESDAY ... ch. 1. 1-11</p>                                          | <p>To all baptized; to his great baptism flocked With awe the regions round, and with them came,</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <p>ST. LUKE.</p>                                                        | <p>From Nazareth, the Son of Joseph deemed, To the flood Jordan, came as then obscure, Unworked, unknown: but Him the Baptist soon</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>WEDNESDAY ... ch. 3. 15-22</p>                                       | <p>Descried, divinely warned, and witness bore As to his worthier, and would have resigned To Him his heavenly office, nor was long His spirit unconfirmed: on Him baptized Heaven opened and, in likeness of a dove, The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice</p>                                                                                                        |
| <p>ST. JOHN.</p>                                                        | <p>From Heaven pronounced Him His beloved Son.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <p>THURSDAY ... ch. 8. 1-8</p>                                          | <p><i>Milton.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <p>ST. MARK.</p>                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p>FRIDAY ... ch. 10. 13-16,<br/>and Acts 16. 25-33</p>                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p>ACTS.</p>                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p>SATURDAY ... ch. 8. 25-40</p>                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

Subject: THE BAPTISM OF JESUS.

(ST. MATTHEW 3. 13-17.)

Learn—St. John, ch. 3. ver. 5.

|                   |   |                           |
|-------------------|---|---------------------------|
| BRIEF<br>SUMMARY. | { | I.—Preparation for Work.  |
|                   |   | (a) At Home.              |
|                   |   | (b) In Patient Waiting.   |
|                   | { | II.—Consecration to Work. |
|                   |   | (c) In Baptism.           |
|                   |   | (d) By the Favour of God. |

INTRODUCTION.—Thirty years in our Lord's life on earth are passed over with but little notice. That He *dwelt* in a city called Nazareth (ch. 2. 23) is all that is told by St. Matthew. The Apostle seems eager to show to his own nation, by the most convincing of proofs, that Jesus was the Messiah. The "voice from Heaven" publicly announces this fact in the presence of John on the banks of the Jordan.

I.—Preparation for Work.

a. At Home.

1. This we find, in ch. 11. ver. 23, was at Nazareth, where He *dwelt*.

Nazareth means "branch," which may explain (ver. 23, above) "He shall be called a Nazarene." (See Isa. 11. 1.) Also, it was a despised place, and may refer to the Lord's lowly and despised condition (Isa. 53. 8).

2. Jesus was truly like one of us, except in sin (Heb. 4. 15). As a child, went to school and was taught to read (St. Luke 4. 16), was obedient, and grew up to manhood, and won the favour of men (St. Luke 2. 51, 52).

3. He was industrious (St. Mark 6. 8), and like other Jews learnt a trade, e.g., Paul a tent-maker (Acts 18. 3).

b. In Patient Waiting.

1. At 12 years of age He was "about His Father's business" (St. Luke 2. 49). This visit to the Temple at Jerusalem is the only recorded incident which the Evangelists note, after the return from Egypt, until "Jesus cometh from Galilee to Jordan unto

John to be baptized of him" (ver. 13). Yet He waits. (See Isa. 30. 18.)

2. At 30 years of age He left His quiet home, to be baptized of John (St. Luke 3. 23), before beginning the real work for which He was sent into the world. At this age the Scribes were sent out to teach. The Levites also took up their priestly office (Num. 4. 3). 30 years passed since the angels had sung His birth-song—since Mary received the heavenly visitor—since the shepherds were told of the Saviour. Probably Zacharias, Elizabeth, Simeon and Anna, the Wise Men, and the Shepherds were in their graves, and still His time was not yet come (St. John 2. 4).—(Refer to Milton, "Paradise Regained.")

*Illustrate.*—When any one leaves home to enter a situation, or to begin a profession, how sad the day of parting to parents, brothers, sisters!—something of this in Galilee.

The home-training will then tell upon the life: obedience and respect to parents, industry, the fear of God, the goodwill of man, which Jesus, as man, showed in His life at Nazareth, were necessary preparation for the greater work to follow. (See Heb. 5. 8.) If for Him, how much more for us!

## No. 3.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### II.—Consecration to Work.

#### c. In Baptism. (Read passage, ver. 13-17.)

1. EXPLAIN "Consecration." Means solemnly devoted to God's service (Heb. 7. 28).
2. The priests on taking up office were washed with water (Ex. 29. 4). Washing in all ages a sign of cleansing—*e.g.*, Naaman (2 Kings 5. 10); David (Ps. 51. 2; also Isa. 1. 16, Ez. 36. 25)—and was repeated as often as new uncleanness demanded.
3. John's baptism was a new rite, done *once*, on acceptance of his call to repentance; hence our Lord's baptism gave Divine approval of the ordinance which is now observed in His Church on earth.—(*Refer to Josephus.*)

#### 4. NOTE THE CIRCUMSTANCES.—"He cometh from Galilee" (ver. 13)—a willing service—no constraint.

Thus, His first public act is to appear as an *inferior* before the Baptist, to *ask a service* at his hands, to *enrol* Himself as one of John's disciples (1 Cor. 12. 13).

"John forbade him" (ver. 14). In ch. 3, ver. 11, we learn how he regarded *Jesus*, who was his cousin—John knew Him to be one holier and greater than himself (St. John 1. 27).

"Fulfil all righteousness" (ver. 15). He made Himself sin for us, and He must needs fulfil all that sin required (2 Cor. 5. 21).

"And render an exact and complete obedience."—(*Dr. Hanna.*)

#### d. By the Favour of God.

1. HOW MANIFESTED? — The heavens opened (ver. 16). (See also Acts 7. 56.)

The Spirit of God descended, as predicted (Ps. 45. 7; Isa. 11. 2). The Holy Ghost (St. Luke 8. 22).

A voice from heaven (ver. 17). The Father speaks, saying, "My beloved Son." Shows His *favour* in accepting His mission as the Saviour of the world. "In whom I am well pleased."

#### 2. HOW OBTAINED!

- (1.) By offering Himself freely, as a *consecrated* life, *set apart* to do the Father's will.
- (2.) *By prayer* (Luke 3. 21). Jesus began, continued, and ended His work on earth by prayer. (See Lesson No. VI.)
- (3.) *By obedience*—just in the act of fulfilling all righteousness, it was then the blessing and favour of God was obtained.

As if to show that those who *obediently*, and *prayerfully*, and *willingly* come to God, and use the means of grace His Church provides, He will bless and show His favour upon in the very act of Devotion and Service.—(*See Daily Portions*, Acts 8. and 16.)

### Illustrations from the Baptismal Service.

#### 1. Consecration in baptism is shown—

- (1.) By the promise to renounce all the pomps and vanities of the world, so that we are not to follow or be led by them.
- (2.) By declaring our belief in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.
- (3.) By promising to obey God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of our life.
- (4.) By not being ashamed to confess Christ crucified, but be willing manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue His faithful soldier and servant unto our life's end.

#### 2. God's favour and grace and blessing in baptism are shown in our being made His children by adoption, and heirs of everlasting salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

### APPLICATION.

In St. Luke 8. 21 we read, "That Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the Heaven was opened."

#### From which we learn—

1. That Baptism is a means of Grace, hallowed by the example of our blessed Lord, and through which all who receive it faithfully are partakers of Heaven's richest blessings.—(*See Church Catechism.*)
2. That as Jesus prayed, *i.e.*, while in the act of prayer, Heaven's Gates were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended; and now through the same Jesus Heaven's Gates are *never* closed to His children's prayers (St. John 14. 12-14).

#### By which we are taught—

1. That it is the *duty* and the high *privilege* of all who hear the Gospel to be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (St. Mark 16. 16; St. Matt. 28. 19).—(*See Daily Portion*, St. John 3.)
2. And that in *prayer*, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, we obtain blessings more than we can either ask or think! (Eph. 3. 21).—(*See also Collect*, 12th Sunday after Trinity.)

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 4.

### Subject: THE TEMPTATION.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. |                  | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                         | ST. MATTHEW.     | "IT IS WRITTEN."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| SUNDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 4. 1-11  | Three times the great enemy offered temptations to our Lord. Three times his offer was refused, with a text of Scripture as the reason: "It is written."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| MONDAY                                                                  | ... " 12-25      | Here is one among many reasons why we ought to be diligent readers of our Bible; the Word is the "Sword of the Spirit"; we shall never fight a good fight if we do not use it as our principal weapon. The Word is the "lamp" for our feet; we shall never keep the King's highway to Heaven if we do not journey by its light (Eph. 6. 17, and Ps. 119. 105). It may well be feared that there is not enough Bible-reading amongst us. It is not sufficient to have the Book; we must actually read it, and pray over it ourselves. It will do us no good if it only lies still in our houses; we must be actually familiar with its contents, and have its texts stored in our memories and minds. Knowledge of the Bible never comes by intuition; it can only be got by hard, regular, daily, attentive, wakeful reading. Do we grudge the time and trouble this will cost us? If we do we are not yet fit for the Kingdom of God.— <i>Bishop Ryle.</i> |
|                                                                         | ST. MARK.        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| TUESDAY                                                                 | ... ch. 1. 9-13  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                         | ST. LUKE.        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| WEDNESDAY...                                                            | ch. 4. 1-13      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                         | EXODUS.          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| THURSDAY                                                                | ...ch. 34. 27-35 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                         | 1 KINGS.         | THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD, AND<br>THE GLORY OF THEM.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| FRIDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 19. 1-8  | There are some that will say that we are never tempted with kingdoms. It may well be, for it needs not be, when less will serve. It was Christ only that was thus tempted; in Him lay an heroic mind that could not be tempted with small matters. But with us it is nothing so, for we esteem more basely of ourselves. We set up our wares at a very easy price; he may buy us even dagger-cheap. He need never carry us so high as the mount. The pinnacle is high enough; yea, the lowest steeple in all the town would serve the turn; or let him but carry us to the leads and gutters of our own houses; nay, let us but stand in our windows or our doors, if he will give us so much as we can see there he will tempt us thoroughly; we will accept it, and thank him too . . . — <i>Bishop Andrews.</i>                                                                                                                                          |
|                                                                         | HEBREWS.         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| SATURDAY                                                                | ... ch. 4. 12-16 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

## No. 4.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### Subject: THE TEMPTATION.

(ST. MATTHEW 4. 1-11.)

Learn—1 Corinthians, ch. 10. ver. 13.

- BRIEF SUMMARY. {
- I.—Preparation for Work.
    - (a) Being filled with the Spirit.
    - (b) Being led through privation.
  - II.—How to Triumph in Work.
    - (c) Having the Sword of the Spirit.
    - (d) Having support from Heaven.

**INTRODUCTION.**—Immediately after baptism our Lord is led by the Spirit to endure for forty days the fiery trial of loneliness, fasting, and of temptation. This may seem strange; yet what more natural! The seed of the woman is led forth to battle against the Devil: (1) to bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3. 15); (2) that He might teach us how to fight the great enemy; and (3) that being touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. 4. 15) He might feel for us and succour those who are tempted. Our Church season of Lent is in remembrance of this trial of our Lord (Heb. 2. 18, and Collect, 1st Sunday in Lent).

#### I.—Preparation for Work.

a. Being filled with the Spirit (St. Luke 4. 1, 2).

1. We need to think of Jesus as really a man, and truly like one of us. Having feelings, desires, hopes, joys, similar to our own, except without sin. He was a perfect man; but it was *as man*. He endured temptation. Otherwise His trials would not be a help to us, or encouragement to withstand temptation and follow His example (1 Pet. 2. 21).

2. THE SPIRIT GIVEN TO HIM AT BAPTISM without measure. It was then that heaven's doors were *opened*, and through Him that they are now never *closed*, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon those who, like Jesus, seek to fulfil all righteousness. *He was full of the Holy Ghost* (St. John 3. 34).

b. Being led by the Spirit.

1. THE OCCASION OF TRIAL.

It is just when God most approves and fills us with His Spirit that Satan makes his greatest assault upon us. It was so with Abraham, in the presence of Abimelech and Pharaoh, and with Job (ch. 1. ver. 6-22), and David (Ps. 51.), and Peter (St. Luke 22. 54-61).

2. THE PLACE OF TRIAL.

St. Luke (ch. 4. ver. 1, 2) states that after the Baptism Jesus returned from Jordan to "the wilderness," which helps to fix the locality in Judea.

A high ridge, near to Jericho, now called Quarantania, after the forty days fasting, is thought to have been the *Place of Trial*.

Compare this with the temptation of our first parents, Adam and Eve.

a. Adam dwelt in the Garden of Eden; he lived in the midst of plenty—had all things to enjoy, and was only denied the fruit of one tree. He had the companionship of Eve, and he *talked* with God. (See Gen. 3.)

b. Adam thought only of his selfish desire; he either forgot or doubted the Word of God, and although he had so much to satisfy his wants, his *abundance* became the very means of his ruin and fall (Gen. 3. 2, 6).

a. JESUS was led into the wilderness—had no food for forty days—the wild animals (lions, bears, jackals, wolves, were the wild beasts of that country) were His companions, and He was *alone*.

b. Jesus thought of the work He freely had come to do for man. He remembered the Word of God, and although denied ordinary food for His body, His *wants* became the road to victory (St. Matt. 4. 3, 4).

## No. 4.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### 8. THE HOUR OF TRIAL.

- a. It may come just when God calls us to do work for Him—as with Moses when he was to receive the Law from Mount Sinai (Ex. 24. and 31. 27-35).—(*Daily Portion.*)
- b. Or in disappointment, loneliness, or despair, and none to notice us—like Elijah (under the juniper tree) (1 Kings 19. 1-8).—(*Daily Portion.*) (Refer to Ep. Andrewes.)
- c. Or when the body is weak and low, or in times of sorrow, when we are called upon to part with those near and dear to us. Then God seems to hide His face from us, and Satan is very active in tempting us to distrust the goodness of God.

We now pass on to think how our Lord Jesus Christ bore His trial and conquered Satan.—(*Read first Daily Portion, Heb. 4.*)

### II.—How to Triumph in Work.

#### 1. Having the Sword of the Spirit. (See Eph. 6. 17.)

We may picture our Lord when the final trial came, exhausted in body, after a conflict of forty days.

The battle now must be lost or won. While the battle is raging the soldier is eager for the conflict. His love of country and home, and his loyalty and honour, carry him through the fight. But when the day is over, hunger and weakness press upon him. How readily will such an one accept bread even from an enemy! So Satan makes his trial of strength now. In spiritual conflict, it is when all are most weak that Satan puts forth his greatest skill and strength.

So he chooses this stage in our Lord's trial for the final fight.

How does he commence?

- a. Bread for the hungry!—just what every man has a right to—the staff of life. Surely Jesus, “if Thou be the Son of God,” need not wait like Hagar (Gen. 21. 16), or Elijah (1 Kings 19. 5), for an angel to give Thee food—“Show Thy power, and command these stones to be made bread.”

This doubt about His being the Son of God was used as a cruel taunt when He hung on the Cross (St. Matt. 27. 40); but He heeds it not.

Jesus says, “It is written” (Deut. 8. 3), showing us that man does not merely live by eating bread—that he must not be guided solely by his bodily wants, but do his duty, and trust in God, Who can supply all his wants.

- b. *Pride*.—Oh! Jesus is proud of His trust in God, thinks Satan. Well, let us test His trust in God.

He taketh Jesus (ver. 6) to a pinnacle of the Temple—and to show that he also knows Scripture, quotes Ps. 91. 11, 12: “Cast Thyself down,” and let all men see the power and protection of God.

Again our Lord replies, “It is written” (Deut. 6. 16), thus, while defeating Satan, showing us that when duty calls into danger we must trust in God, but we may not tempt God by our self-will or presumption.

*Beware of spiritual pride.*

- c. *Riches*.—There is yet one more “road to ruin” untried.

Satan, as the “Prince of this world,” takes our Lord to the top of a high mountain, and offers this “carpenter’s son” all riches, the kingdoms of this world (St. Luke 4. 5), for one mark of homage.

“Get thee behind Me, Satan—it is written” (Deut. 10. 20, and 6. 13, 14). Thus again teaching us to remember His own words, “What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?” (St. Mark 8. 36).—(*Refer to “It is Written,” Bp. Ryle.*)

#### 2. Having support from Heaven.

The Devil vanquished, we read, in ver. 11, angels came and ministered unto Him.

Thus teaching us that in the path of duty, in the hour of trial, and in the day of temptation, those who feed on His Word have support for their need, and that Heaven itself, with its ministering spirits, “sent forth to succour those who succour want,” will not leave us comfortless, but will support and strengthen us according to our necessity, and according to the infinite love and compassion of our Heavenly Father, in and for the sake of His Son, Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 5.

### Subject: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| St. MATTHEW.                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| SUNDAY ... ch. 5. 1-12                                                  | Preach the Word (2 Tim. 4. 2).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                         | A PICTURE.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| MONDAY ... " 13-20                                                      | <p>Very wonderful is this picture in itself. It is a picture to gaze upon, and to study, and to learn by heart, and to set side by side with that of our own sinful selves; that we may both be humbled by seeing how little we are like it, and also strive to win a fuller share of its blessedness. . . . It is as though our Lord began His sermon by a vivid description of the true saint. . . . He draws a glowing picture of the "blessed," and holding that up, and pointing to it, says (as it were), "Now listen while I unfold to you the hidden elements of strength and beauty which make up this perfect whole." Observe, too, how this picture is entirely that of a <i>spiritual</i> holiness. . . . It is no <i>doing</i> of this or that <i>duty</i> which is declared to be "blessed." Christ goes at once to the heart. His picture is, by a few masterly strokes, full of the living <i>inward graces</i> which form and stamp and characterise the Christian man.—<i>Bp. Walsham How.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| TUESDAY ... " 21-37                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| WEDNESDAY... " 38-45                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| ACTS.                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| THURSDAY ... ch. 2. 29-41                                               | <p>THE HORNS OF HATTIN.</p> <p>This mountain or hill—for it only rises sixty feet above the plain—is that known to pilgrims as the Mount of the Beatitudes, the supposed scene of the "Sermon on the Mount." The tradition cannot lay claim to an early date; it was in all probability suggested first to the Crusaders by its remarkable situation. But that situation so strikingly coincides with the intimations of the Gospel narrative, as almost to force the inference that in this instance the eye of those who selected the spot was for once rightly guided. It is the only height seen in this direction from the shores of the Lake of Gennesareth. The plain on which it stands is easily accessible from the Lake, and from that plain to the summit is but a few minutes' walk. The platform at the top is evidently suitable for the collection of a multitude, and corresponds precisely to the "level place" (St. Luke 6. 17, New Version), to which He would "come down," as from its higher horns, to address the people. Its situation is central both to the peasants of the Galilean hills and the fishermen of the Galilean lake, between which it stands, and would therefore be a natural resort both to "Jesus and His disciples" (St. Matt. 4. 25, and 5. 1).—<i>Sinat and Palestine, p. 269 (Stanley).</i></p> |
| JOSHUA.                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| FRIDAY ... ch. 24. 14-18                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| PSALMS.                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| SATURDAY ... 34. 1-22                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

Subject: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

(ST. MATTHEW 5. TO 7.)

Learn—Isaiah, ch. 55. ver. 11.

BRIEF SUMMARY. { I.—The Time and Place.  
II.—The Audience.  
III.—The Sermon.

INTRODUCTION.—After the Temptation we read (ch. 4. 13) that Jesus left Nazareth, and came and dwelt at Capernaum; and later (ch. 9. 1) "He entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into His own city." Henceforth Capernaum becomes the centre of our Lord's ministry in Galilee. It was a busy town, and from thence His fame spread throughout all Syria. Great multitudes of people (ch. 4. 23-25) came to hear Him. Our Lord had gone throughout Galilee, teaching and preaching in the synagogues, and healing all diseases, so that the people were evidently stirred up to much enthusiasm, thinking, perhaps, that at last the long-expected Messiah had come. People from all parts of the country (4. 25) followed Him. Seeing the multitudes (5. 1) He withdraws to a mountain near the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and there, with His disciples around Him, He preaches His famous "Sermon on the Mount," setting forth the "Gospel of His kingdom" (4. 23). Probably the sermon was a summary of His teaching which He had already spoken in the Galilean synagogues. We can only refer in this Lesson very briefly to the general character of the sermon and its teaching.

I.—The Time and Place.

Compare giving of Law on Mount Sinai (Ex. 19. 16) with the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom (ch. 4. 23). The voice of God in thunder, proclaiming the Law on Sinai: the tender voice of Jesus—"He opened His mouth and taught them, saying, *Blessed.*"

1. The Place.

Mount, Beatitudes. — Tradition from time of the Crusades has given the name to a mount near Sea of Galilee and close to Capernaum, and pointed to it, as the place where our Saviour sat down and taught (ver. 1. Compare Acts 13. 14 and 16. 13).—(Refer to "*Horns of Hattin.*")

2. The Time.

This Sermon was delivered during the first year of our Lord's ministry, "some time between the winter and spring" (Lange). Jesus had been "about all Galilee,"

preaching and healing the sick, so that, as in a great mission, the people had been aroused, and were eager to listen to His words. The Feast of Pentecost, commemorative of the giving of the Law, was at hand. And before keeping the feast in Jerusalem, Jesus expounds to the assembled multitudes in Galilee the true meaning of that Law.—(Refer to "*A Picture.*" by Bp. How.)

II.—The Audience.

1. Gathered together on the mountain side; not forbidden to touch the Mount as at Sinai, but invited to draw near (ver. 1). "His disciples came unto Him."—(Compare Daily Portion, Acts 2.)

2. It has been noted (Introduction) that Capernaum was a busy town. It was the centre of the Roman government in the north. A Roman road passed through it to Damascus and Syria. Much business was transacted, and much people dwelt on the sea-coasts; so that our Lord

## Ho. 5.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

spake to Jews and Gentiles, merchants and fishermen—many of whom would, by their position and occupation, carry His words to distant parts of the country.

### III.—The Sermon (ch. 5. 6. 7).

#### 1. Its Introduction (ver. 1-16).

Christ came to found His Kingdom of Grace on earth, and He points out the spiritual characteristics of the members of His kingdom, viz., meekness, mercy, purity, power to endure persecution. See the eight "Blesseds" (ver. 3-11).

He came in fulfilment of prophecy (Gen. 12. 8), not only to *purchase* blessings, but to *pronounce* blessings on His people.

*Note.*—The Old Testament ends with a "curse" (Mal. 4. 6), the New Testament begins with "blessings." Jesus hath removed the "curse," and brought "blessing" in its stead (Gal. 3. 13, 14).

#### 2. The Subject.—Righteousness of Life (ver. 20. Comp. Ps. 24. 4, 5).

That is the fulfilling of the Law, or, as it may be put, the *filling up* of the Law. Like an outline picture, needs to be filled up by the artist—or notes of lessons need the intelligent working out of a teacher to give them life. (*Daily Portion*, Joshua 24.)

It is Christ only who can "fill up" the whole requirements of the Law. He is "our righteousness" (Jer. 23. 6, and 1 Cor. 1. 30); we have no righteousness of our own (Isa. 64. 6), but *by faith* His righteousness becomes ours (2 Cor. 5. 21).

#### a. Righteousness Interpreted (ver. 21-48).

"Ye have heard that it was said (not *by*, but) to them of old times"—this expression occurs five times (ver. 21, 27, 33, 38, 48). Jesus in the words, "But I say unto you," shows that He who gave the Law claims the right to explain it, and that the subjects of His kingdom are not to listen to the false teaching of Scribes or Pharisees, or other false teachers, who give their own interpretation of Scripture, if at variance with His will and word (1 Tim. 6. 20).—(*Daily Portion*, Ps. 34.)

#### b. Motives (ch. 6. 1-18).

In the three Christian duties—*Almsgiving, Prayer, Fasting*—the motive ought to be, not to gain the esteem or applause of man, but the approbation of our Heavenly Father.

*Hypocrisy* and *formalism* were the great sins of the professing religious Jews.

"Take heed" (ch. 6. 1), as if to show what danger we are in, should we neglect to render God honour and service.

#### c. True Riches (ver. 19-34).

Our treasures are to be in heaven, not on earth—that is to say, whether in prosperity or poverty, or anxiety or earthly service, if our minds are stayed on Him, He will be our true riches and our guide in all things, and will take care of us.

"Lay up" (ver. 20). The Christian has a *choice* to make. Jesus designs not to deprive His followers of their treasure, only to direct them to a right choice. Solomon's choice of that *good thing* is very sad (Eccl. 2. 3-11). He had every earthly thing upon which his heart was set, and yet all was *vanity*. Not so the Christian (Philip. 3. 8, 9; 2 Tim. 4. 8).

#### d. Helps (ch. 7. 1-20).

- (1.) Self-examination, not prying curiously or unkindly into the condition of others (ver. 1-5).
- (2.) Diligent prayer (ver. 7-11), for God's good gifts, and especially for His Holy Spirit.—(*See Lesson No. 6.*)
- (3.) Doing to others as we would be done by (ver. 12).
- (4.) Decision for Christ (ver. 13, 14)—choose the strait and narrow way.
- (5.) Beware of deceivers (v. 15); we shall know them by *their fruits*: as we shall truly know whether we ourselves are subjects of Christ's kingdom, when we truly turn to Him, and bring forth good fruit.

#### e. Warnings (ver. 21).

The "saying Lord, Lord" is not enough; we must be *doers* of the will of God. By so doing we show our faith in Christ; we seek guidance of His Holy Spirit, and by the mercy of God, through the blood of His dear Son, we are on the sure rock for time and eternity (ver. 24, 25).—(*See Lesson No. 7.*)

### LESSON.

Take heed how ye hear (Isa. 55. 11; St. Luke 8. 18; 2 Tim. 4. 2).

## Ho. 5.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### SKETCH FOR JUNIOR CLASS.

#### "SERMON ON THE MOUNT."

##### I.—The Occasion.

1. *Temptation now ended.*
2. *People had seen many wonderful things done by Jesus.*
3. *Multitudes follow Him to a mountain side, near to Sea of Galilee.*

##### II.—The Sermon.

1. *Jesus preaches to the people.*
2. *The Text: "Blessed."*
3. *How explained—*
  - a. Holy Thoughts.
  - b. Holy Words.
  - c. Holy Acts.
  - d. Holy Desires.

##### III.—Application.

1. *Pray to God.*
2. *Work for God.*
3. *Trust in God.*

### METHOD.

1. Open Lesson by reference (say) to children's service in church or school. When prayers are ended, then *one* is appointed to  *speak, or explain, or preach. We are to think to-day of a wonderful service held in a land more than 3,000 miles off, about 1,850 years ago.*

2. *Jesus is the appointed Preacher or Teacher sent by God.*

Picture the scene: The congregation, so large no church or school in that country would hold the multitude—the service, in the open air, in a sunny land, plenty of grass to sit upon; and the people listen to *One*, "who spake as never man spake."

3. Now, explain such parts of the Sermon as may be selected for instruction of class, as for example, Part II. in Sketch.

4. Every *new word used*, not previously taught by teachers, should be carefully explained.

5. The passage for Lesson being too long for reading at lesson-time, portions should be selected beforehand.

6. Recapitulate what has been taught so far. Make free use of catechetical method, and, as a rule, work backwards, so as not to break the order of Lesson.

7. Apply Lesson—Part III. in Sketch. Not enough to hear sermons, we must practise *what we hear every day*, at home, or wherever we may be.

*Note.*—A Sketch for a Senior Class, with hints on Method and Management, is also given, in the hope that the adaptation of the Lesson to *two grades* of Classes may be more helpful to Teachers than if the same methods had been applied to two different subjects.

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 6.

### Subject: THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Daily Portions of  
Illustrative Reading for  
Teachers and Scholars.

Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.

#### ST. MATTHEW.

#### THE MANNER OF PRAYER.

SUNDAY ... ch. 6. 1-15

Let your first thoughts in prayer be of Him. He who has first come to God as his Father will go on to remember the things of God, even before He thinks of his own.

MONDAY ... „ 16-24

Very marvellous in its order and in its tenderness is this feature of our Lord's Prayer. The creature, in his lowliness and in his degradation, in his misery and in his sin, must be made to think of God before he thinks of himself. Herein is wisdom. And in doing so—in putting himself after God—in desiring the Divine honour and the Divine dominion more than he desires his own bread, or his own forgiveness, or his safety—he will find that he has provided unawares for himself also; that he has learned happiness in learning his place; that he has found the secret of peace in finding the importance of God. . . . Herein is tenderness. Christ knew what was best for man when He taught him, if it be possible, to forget himself in God.

TUESDAY ... „ 25-34

#### GENESIS.

To be allowed to pray—to be commanded to pray—to be taught to pray; in other words, to be assured that God will listen to us, that we have but to call upon Him from the heart, and He will hear the sound and answer it—this surely should be enough! How great, how wonderful the dignity thus bestowed! that we should be in present communication, in personal contact with *the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity!*—*Deah Vaughan.*

WEDNESDAY... ch. 32, 24-32

#### EXODUS.

#### LITTLE PRAYERS.

THURSDAY ... ch. 17. 8-16

Not only morning and evening, but often during the day, lift up your heart in prayer. Little prayers darted up silently are a great help, such as “Lord, guide me, keep me, save me.” It is a good plan to mix up a little prayer with everything. One day a lady, who was visiting a Christian couple, admired a pear-tree in their garden. The wife smiled, and glanced at her husband. “Why do you smile?” asked the lady. “Because you were surprised at our pear-tree, ma’am; we expected a fine one, for my husband there, when he digged the hole and put in the young tree, dropped in a prayer too. There is not a tree in the garden that has not a prayer at the root; and so, of course, they come up fine.” Prayer will not hinder us in our duties or unfit us for our work; on the contrary, many things fail “because they have not prayer at the root.” We have no need to fear that our work will be badly done if we ask God to help us to do it well, and we shall surely take pains with what we have prayed about; prayer makes us careful.—*Heart Lessons, by Louisa Clayton (R.T.S.).*

1 SAMUEL.

FRIDAY ... ch. 3. 1-10.

#### 2 KINGS.

SATURDAY ... ch. 20. 1-7

Subject: THE LORD'S PRAYER.

(ST. MATTHEW 6. 9-15.)

Learn—Isaiah, ch. 65. ver. 24.

BRIEF SUMMARY. { I.—May I ?  
II.—Can I ?  
III.—Do I ? } Pray.

INTRODUCTION.—In our Lord's great Sermon on the Mount He shows what is required of those who follow the Royal Standard of the Cross, and become faithful subjects of His kingdom. In the Lord's Prayer, like a true and wise captain of a great army, He provides one of the means whereby those who follow Him may be daily supplied with strength and power to go forth to the battle of the Lord.

"O Thou, by whom we come to God,  
The Life, the Truth, the Way!  
The path of prayer Thyself has trod;  
Lord, teach us how to pray!"  
Montgomery.

I.—May I pray?—Illustrate:—

1. The teacher may picture a rebel soldier going forth to battle against his lawful sovereign—like Absalom against David; or, in our own days, like Arabi Pacha against his sovereign, the Khedive of Egypt. After defeat, and surrender, and perhaps imprisonment, he may well put to himself the question, "*May I ask for pardon?*"

In such condition we are, *by nature*, rebels against God (Rom. 8. 23; Eph. 2. 12). Our parents in Eden rebelled and fell; and the punishment of their rebellion was death (Gen. 2. 17; Rom. 6. 23).

2. From the dark cell the prisoner will first think of the *character* of his offended sovereign, whether an *amnesty* has been issued, whether the *word* of the sovereign may be trusted, and what are the *conditions* of pardon.

Think of our God under each of these aspects:—

- (1.) His character—God is love (1 John 4. 8).
- (2.) The amnesty—He will abundantly pardon (Isa. 55. 7).
- (3.) His Word—Is truth (St. John 17. 17; Numb. 23. 19).

(4.) Conditions of pardon—Repentance and faith (Acts 20. 20, 21). But a follower of Jesus (see Introduction) has a privilege which, *by nature*, he cannot have.

3. "A Child of God" (see Catechism) may change the question and say humbly and thankfully, "Yes, *I may* pray, to *my* Father in Heaven."

II.—Can I pray?

Before we can do anything we must be *taught*. If it be even so simple a thing as learning to write, we must first be taught how to hold the pen, and then to imitate the teacher's writing which he places before us. In some such sense came our Lord's disciples to Him one day and said, "Lord, teach us to pray"—and Jesus said, "After this manner pray ye" (ver. 9); and in St. Luke 11. 2, "When ye pray, say, Our Father." Examine this Prayer.

1. The manner of prayer.—Our Lord's perfect pattern.

It consists of ten parts or sentences. *One*, teaches to whom we pray—*Three*, relate to His name, His kingdom, His will—*four*, to our daily wants—*one*, as to our feelings for others—and the *last* speaks of praise to God.

## No. 6.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### 2. Explanation of Prayer.

- (1.) **Our Father.**—So Jesus teaches us to speak direct to God, not through angels, or spirits, or saints.

"Our" as we go to God in Jesus' Name (St. John 14. 13), so this word teaches us that He goes with us to the Throne of Grace. It also shows that we must pray for others.

"Father"—by creation, by reconciliation (Col. 1. 20-22), by adoption (Rom. 8. 15).

- (2.) **Hallowed be Thy Name.**

a. So our Lord prayed (St. John 12. 28). God's Name is His *power, wisdom, mercy, love, and truth.*

Take not the Name of the Lord in vain, but pray that God in all things may be glorified (1 Pet. 4. 11).

- b. **Thy kingdom come.**—Jesus had been speaking of His kingdom (previous Lesson); and here we specially pray, as on Advent Sunday, for His coming again (Heb. 8. 11)—that He will "hasten His kingdom" (*Church Service*).

- c. **Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.**—That all men may find their truest happiness, as do the angels, in perfectly obeying His will (Ps. 103. 20, 21; Heb. 1. 14).

- (3.) **Our daily wants:** a. **Give us this day our daily bread.**—So we are taught daily dependence on God for daily supply. *Bread*, the staff of life, includes all our bodies require (1 Tim. 6. 8).

- b. **Forgive us our debts, or sins.**—Thus, as truly as we have daily wants, so have we daily sins that need forgiveness.

All self-righteousness condemned, and we are taught the habit of confession to God alone (1 John 1. 9).

- c. **Lead us not into temptation.**—Our weakness is great, we are liable to fall, and we pray that God may not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear (1 Cor. 10. 13).

- d. **Deliver us from evil.**—From the evil in the world, and from the power of the "*Evil one*" (New Version). We constantly see, hear, and feel the power of evil in this life, and so we need the

help of the Lord (St. John 17. 15).—(*Daily Portion*, Gen. 32.)

- (4.) **As we forgive our debtors.**—In the midst of our own wants we must think of others, and desire forgiveness as we would forgive one who offends us.

Our Lord comments on this part (ver. 14, 15), showing us that prayer without charity is mockery of God, and hypocrisy.

- (5.) **FINALLY. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.**—Both in this world and the world to come; and so the prayer ends as it began by ascribing the praise and the glory to God.—(*See "The Manner of Prayer," Dean Vaughan.*)

We may now again each ask ourselves, "*Can I pray?*" The answer to this will best be given when we truly can say *yes* to the next question.

### III.—Do I pray?

1. Do we have fixed times of prayer? like Daniel, who prayed three times a day (Dan. 6. 10); and David, who prayed at evening, morning, and noon (Ps. 55. 17).—(*Daily Portion*, 1 Sam. 3.)
2. Do we *desire* to pray? Thousands say the Lord's Prayer, who never really pray. They have no sense of need, and care nothing for the glory of God, or for their fellow-man. And yet they attend church and say their prayers (Isa. 29. 13).
3. Do we pray with the heart and the understanding also? (1 Cor. 14. 15).—(*Daily Portion*, 2 Kings 20.)
4. Have we really asked Jesus to teach us to pray? (St. John 14. 16-18.) Until we can sincerely say "yes" to these questions, we may not answer, "*Yes, I do pray.*"

### LESSONS.

1. **Trust Jesus.**—"Ask, and ye shall receive" (St. Matt. 7. 7).
2. **Prove Jesus.**—"There shall not be room enough to receive" the blessing (Mal. 3. 10).
3. **Expect an Answer to Prayer.**—(Isa. 65. 24).—(*See "Little Prayers."*)

## No. 6.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### SKETCH FOR SENIOR CLASS.

#### "SERMON ON THE MOUNT."

(See Lesson No. 5.)

1. The Locality. (See "*Horns of Hattin*.")

2. The Time. — Pentecost near at hand. Giving of Law on Sinai, thus called to the remembrance of every Jew.

*Jesus* now interprets that Law.

Compare the two scenes. (See "*Notes*.")

3. The People. — By what means aroused to take an interest in the words and work of *Jesus* of Nazareth? (See "*Introduction*.")

4. The Sermon. (Read "*A Picture*," by Bishop Walsham How.)

#### (1.) *The Argument.*

1. The Law requires not merely outward observance, but inward spiritual holiness.
2. The Law must be kept perfectly.
3. Christ only can truly keep the Law.
4. The "blessed," who are members of His kingdom, are, by faith, partakers of His righteousness.
5. It is thus only that the Law can be fulfilled. (See "*Notes*.")

#### (2.) *Responsibilities of His Disciples.*

1. Must be pure in motive.
2. Must seek those enduring riches which belong to His kingdom.

#### (3.) *Helps for His People.*

1. Self-examination.
2. Decision for Christ.
3. Prayer.
4. Activity—must be "Doers of the Word."

### METHOD AND MANAGEMENT.

#### 1. Arrangement of Class.

If practicable, arrange for holding Senior Classes in rooms separate from the ordinary school.

Sit round a table, and see that each member of the class is provided with Bibles or Prayer Books as the Lesson requires; and paper and pencils, so as to accustom the class to take Notes of the Lesson.

2. Reading.—As a rule avoid the mere "reading round" of the passage.

The older the class the greater should be the distinction from an ordinary class, in the details of management.

*Silent Reading*, on certain occasions, has been found very effective. Just a minute or two before the Lesson begins ask each to read over the portion of Scripture selected for the Lesson.

This method should be varied. Sometimes the teacher, or one of the class, reading the whole passage.

In the case of the "Sermon on the Mount," as the passage is long, portions only need be read, as the Lesson proceeds, in either of the ways suggested.

3. Teaching.—This also will differ from an ordinary class very considerably. The catechetical must give place, a good deal, to that which is more generally adopted in giving addresses.

Pauses should be made to allow the class to take notes, such as in Sketch.

But the method of questioning may be encouraged in another way, by allowing the members of the class to ask questions. This plan, if wisely controlled, will lead to much helpful progress, and will be self-testing as to advancement in knowledge.

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 7.

### Subject: THE SURE FOUNDATION.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. |                  | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ST. MATTHEW.                                                            |                  | ANECDOTES.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| SUNDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 7. 1-11  | 1.—Bishop Butler's Testimony.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| MONDAY                                                                  | ... „ 12-20      | The great thinker was lying on his death-bed; and so lying, he turned round to his chaplain, "I know that Jesus Christ is a Saviour, but how am I to know that He is a Saviour to me?" The chaplain answered simply, "My lord, it is written, 'Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.'" The dying Bishop paused and mused, and then he said, "I have often read and thought of that Scripture, but never till this moment did I feel its full power, and now I die happy."                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| TUESDAY                                                                 | ... „ 21-29      | 2.—Alexander the Great.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                         | 1 PETER.         | Alexander the Great presents, in one instance of his life, a most impressive proof of the greatness of the soul. You are aware that that monarch overran the whole earth, and subdued every nation; and at the conclusion of universal victory, what did he say? "Now that I have gained the whole world, that object of ten thousand individuals, that wish of ten thousand hearts, I am satisfied!" No, Alexander the Great had something more in him, though he knew it not; he sat down—that monarch, that mighty conqueror—and wept like a child, because he had not another world to conquer. The world could not fill his mind, nor would it fill a babe's!— <i>Cuyler</i> . |
| WEDNESDAY                                                               | ... ch. 2. 1-10  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                         | 2 CORINTHIANS.   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| THURSDAY                                                                | ... ch. 5. 1-10  | 3.—Legend of a Rock.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                         | ISAIAH.          | A legend says, that a powerful and rich king, troubled in heart in spite of all his possessions, went to a holy dervise, and asked him for the secret of happiness. The dervise led him forth in front of a high rock, on the top of which an eagle had built her nest. Then the dervise said, "Imitate that bird; build thy throne in heaven, and thou shalt reign there unmolested and in peace."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| FRIDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 28. 9-17 | <i>Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                         | PSALMS.          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| SATURDAY                                                                | ... 1, 1-6       | 4.—Melancthon.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                         |                  | Just before Melancthon died, he expressed a wish to hear some choice passages of Scripture read; and, this desire having been met, he was asked by his son-in-law, Sabinius, whether he would have anything else; to which he replied in those emphatic words, "Alind nihil, nisi cœlum."—"Nothing else but heaven;" and shortly after this he gently breathed his last.— <i>Moore</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## Ho. 7.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

---

### Subject: THE SURE FOUNDATION.

(ST. MATTHEW 7. 21-29.)

Learn—Isaiah, ch. 28. ver. 16.

~~~~~

BRIEF SUMMARY.

- I.—The Builders.
 - II.—The Buildings.
 - III.—The Foundations.
-

INTRODUCTION.—From the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount we take one more Lesson. Our Lord, in infinite mercy, desiring that none shall at last be shut out of the heavenly fold, warns His followers of many dangers in their path. The last, not least. To pray, not enough. Many shall cry, "Lord, Lord;" but His disciples must be active doers of His will (ver. 21):—

"Up and doing, little Christians,
Up and doing while 'tis day;
Do the work the Master gives you,
Do not loiter by the way.
For we all have work before us,
You, dear child, as well as I;
Let us learn to seek our duty,
And to do it heartily."

F. R. HAVERGAL.

Good and false service our Lord then proceeds to illustrate by parable.

CONTRAST

A.—The House on the Rock.

I.—The Builders on the Rock—who are they?

St. James describes both classes in his epistle. Those who build on the Rock, he says in ch. 1. 22, are both *hearers* and *doers*.

They *look* into the law of God, setting not up laws of building for themselves (ver. 25).

They *continue*—and are steadfast. Are not forgetful hearers—are doers of the work—are blessed.

They visit the poor in their affliction, they sympathise with their fellow-creatures in trouble. They keep themselves unspotted from the world (ver. 27).

Their religion is pure and their life unselfish; all is done as in God's sight, *before* God, to His honour and glory (St. James 1. 22-27).

B.—The House on the Sand.

I.—The Builders on Sand—who are they?

Those who build on the Sand are also hearers.

They profess to be Christians, and are very indignant (ver. 22) should this be doubted. They hear and attend regularly the means of grace, but they go no further. They are *hearers* only, not doers of the Word (Ezek. 33. 31, 33).

They do not place God's law first, but self is the first consideration (St. James 1. 24).

They control not their tongues, but often speak language very dishonouring to God (ver. 26).

Their hearts are false. They are self-deceived. Religion to them is a vain profession, and serves but as a cloak to hide what is evil from themselves and their neighbours (Jer. 7. 4).

Note.—Thus far it will be observed that each class is equally diligent as *hearers* of the Word. One makes a decided outward profession—the other is deeply anxious to know the law of God at each step he takes, and seeks to practise it.—("Legend of a Rock.")

No. 7.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

When a house is about to be built, it is not only necessary to have the builders, but it must be made clear as to the *purpose* for which it is intended. A *plan* will be chosen, and the quality of the *materials* approved for the structure.

AGAIN—CONTRAST

II.—The Building on the Rock.

a. The Purpose—for *Eternity*.

A building to dwell in is a daily want—one of our greatest needs.

God's children have daily needs and wants to be supplied, but they place the wants of the soul before those of the body. So in ver. 24, the "wise man" is like Moses, who with a fixed choice and *purpose*, forsook Egypt and riches, choosing affliction with the people of God rather than the pleasures of sin for a season (Heb. 11. 24-26). See example of Peter and other disciples. (Lessons Nos. 17 and 18.)

b. The Plan—is already prepared (3 Cor. 5. 1). Our Lord has gone before to prepare for us (St. John 14. 2). And although commanded to work out our own salvation (Phil. 2. 13), we know *by faith* that Jesus hath done it for us. The plan and work are His.

c. The Materials.

1. The wise man has no self-sufficiency (2 Cor. 8. 5).
2. He feels his sinfulness. Poor materials these, yet, like David in his sins, he cries, "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Ps. 51. 10).
3. He then looks to God for all he needs (Phil. 4. 19).—"Bishop Butler."

The next requisite in house-building is the site, or place on which to build.

III.—The Sure Foundation.

The wise man digs down deep, and is not satisfied until he finds the Rock on which to build his house.—(Ex. "Melancthon.")

Notice—Each builder has had equal privileges, heard the same Gospel preached, and to each come at last the same trials—the rain of adversity, the floods of anxiety, the winds of temptation (see ver. 24-29), but see the result—

The Rock is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 10. 4).

He who rests his hope, his life, his joy on Him, finds his house safe for time and eternity. To him "Christ is all and in all" (Col. 3. 11).

He is wise who rests his hopes on Christ (1 Cor. 3. 11-14).

II.—The Building on the Sand.

a. The Purpose—for *Time*

The pursuit of wealth fills the minds of a vast number of professing Christians. Riches choke the word (St. Matt. 13. 28). Riches seem to some their greatest want, adding land to land their greatest earthly delight. Yet how soon all must be left behind (St. Luke 12. 19, 20).

Hypocrisy builds many big houses—looks grand, imposes upon people for awhile, but seldom lasts long. The boys or girls, who pretend to be what they are not, are building on sand, and preparing for a bad fall.

b. The Plan.—Such builders depend entirely on *self*. They work hard—learned they may be. They may have many gifts; they may even use them, prophesy or teach, and yet sadly fail.

Ex.—Judas, Saul, Caiaphas.

c. The Materials.

The other hearer is not troubled much about his weakness. He even repents frequently. He *prays*, is diligent in attendance at church, and seeks from his minister the help he feels he needs. Yet if all this only leads him to trust in the *means* and not in *Christ alone*, he is as shifting sand, and will find no real rest or peace to his soul.—("Alexander the Great.")

III.—The House built on Sand.

The foolish man is content to have his house anywhere, provided he finds earthly comforts upon which his heart is fixed (Hos. 12. 7, 8).

Notice—Each builder has had equal privileges, heard the same Gospel preached, and to each come at last the same trials—the rain of adversity, the floods of anxiety, the winds of temptation (see ver. 24-29), but see the result—

The Sand is the World (St. Matt. 6. 19).

He who, like Lot or Balaam, seeks selfishly the best for this life, and thinks little of others, may find his earthly house fail, and at last lose all.

He is foolish who loves the world (1 Cor. 3. 13-15).

St. Matthew's Gospel.

NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 8.

Subject: THE CENTURION'S SERVANT.

Daily Portions of Illustrative Reading for Teachers and Scholars.	Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.
ST. MATTHEW.	A SOLDIER'S FAITH.
SUNDAY ... ch. 8. 1-15	One day when Napoleon I. was reviewing his troops in Paris, he let fall the reins of his horse upon the animal's neck, when the proud charger galloped away. Before the rider could recover the bridle, a common soldier ran out from the ranks, caught the reins, stopped the horse, and placed the bridle again in the hands of the Emperor. "Much obliged to you, captain," said Napoleon. The man <i>immediately</i> believed the chief, and said, "Of what regiment, sir?" Napoleon, delighted with his quick perception and manly trust in his word, replied, "Of my guards," and rode away. As soon as the Emperor left the soldier laid down his gun, saying, "He may take it who will," and started for the Company of Staff Officers . . . and so the soldier came duly to his post as Captain of Napoleon's Guard.— <i>Sibbs</i> .
MONDAY ... " 16-27	HUMILITY.
TUESDAY ... " 28-34	The more humility the more room, the more fulness. For the proud hill-tops let the rain run off, the lowly valleys are richly watered. <i>St. Augustine.</i>
ISAIAH.	OF HUMBLE SUBMISSION.
WEDNESDAY... ch. 85. 1-10	God protecteth the humble and delivereth him; the humble He loveth and comforteth; unto the humble man He inclineth Himself; unto the humble He giveth great grace; and after his humiliation He raiseth him to glory. Unto the humble He revealeth His secrets, and secretly draweth and inviteth him unto Himself. The humble person, though he suffer confusion, is yet tolerably well in peace; for that he resteth on God, and not on the world. Do not think that Thou hast made any progress, unless thou esteem thyself inferior to all. <i>Thomas à Kempis.</i>
JOB.	BEGINNING OF FAITH.
THURSDAY ... ch. 36. 1-15	When the Suspension Bridge across the Niagara was to be erected, the question was how to get the cable over. With a favourable wind, a kite was elevated, which alighted on the other shore. To its insignificant string a cord was attached, which was drawn over, then a rope, then a larger rope, then a cable strong enough to sustain the iron cable which supported the bridge, over which heavily-laden trains pass in safety. This could never have been done but for the little kite-string, which may represent a weak faith, yet reaches to Christ and heaven, and may enlarge to gigantic proportions, and hold the possessor fast anchored within the veil.— <i>Satter</i> .
ACTS.	
FRIDAY ... ch. 10. 1-8	
ST. LUKE.	
SATURDAY ... ch. 7. 1-10	

Subject: THE CENTURION AND HIS
SERVANT.

(ST. MATTHEW 8. 5-13.)

Learn—St. Matthew, ch. 5. ver. 3; and Psalms 41. 1.

~~~~~

- BRIEF SUMMARY. { I.—The Centurion's Character.  
II.—The Centurion's Faith.  
III.—The Centurion's Reward.
- 

INTRODUCTION.—Our Lord's teaching astonished the people, for He taught them as one having authority (ch. 7. 29). The Sermon finished, He came down from the Mount, and had scarcely entered Capernaum before He was met by a number of influential Jewish Elders (see St. Luke 7. 1-10), who besought Him to grant a favourable answer to the prayer of a Roman officer, to heal his servant (or *slave*, as he should be more properly called). These men told our Lord that, although a Gentile, this Centurion loved the Jews, and had built the synagogue at Capernaum for them, and was *worthy*. The fame of Jesus (ch. 4. 24) was thus having effect on Jew and Gentile.

---

I.—The Centurion's Character.

1. This Centurion, a captain over one hundred soldiers, was a great man and ruler over the city of Capernaum—probably kept the garrison of soldiers there.

Being a Roman, he could not expect to win much favour from the Jews. Suppose England were conquered by the French, and a French commander made Governor of Dover, how the inhabitants would, in heart, rebel against the foreigner. In a position like this was the Centurion placed. Yet we find he had won the good-will of the people of Capernaum.

How was this?

2. He was very different to most Romans—humble, gentle, considerate.—(*"Humility."*)  
a. He was good and kind to those of his own house. This is shown in his great anxiety about his slave, or servant (ver. 5, 6).

Picture some slaves in olden time, in *Africa*, or *America*, or *West Indies*—how terribly treated, master's will supreme, no liberty, used like cattle, and not so well cared for.

Illustrate by early life of Bishop Crowther, who was once a slave.

This slave of the Centurion's absolutely under his control to do with as he liked, yet how kind! If his own child had been ill he could not have been more anxious.

- b. He was good and kind to the Jews—a rare thing among the Romans, who sometimes, like their master, Herod, ruled with great cruelty. Another instance, mentioned in Acts 10. 2.

He built them a magnificent synagogue, thought to have been the most handsome in the city. So the Elders who came to Jesus said he was *worthy* of any favour (St. Luke 7. 4), and that he loved their nation.

## No. 8.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### II.—The Centurion's Faith.

1. Very different to most of the Jews.

a. Here was a great captain, a high State official, seeking help from whom? A carpenter's son! So thought the Jews scornfully (St. Mark 6. 3).

b. Very humble was the Centurion (ver. 8): "not worthy" that Jesus should come under his roof (Isa. 57. 15; St. James 4. 6).—(See "Thomas A' Kempis.")

c. Ready to obey (ver. 9).—As a soldier he gave his orders and required obedience; so he came to Jesus ready to do without question His will.

His lawful profession had taught him the importance of obeying those in authority. He saw in Jesus One before whom he could bow, and to whom he felt himself unworthy to speak. He learnt by faith how truly to obey God (1 Sam. 15. 22).

How different to the Jews!

d. "Speak the word only" (ver. 8).—The Word of Jesus to the Centurion's servant would at once bring *healing*—so believed this Roman soldier (See 1 Chron. 5. 20).

How blessed to the Jews, could they have realised, as did this Centurion, the power of Jesus' word, and "put their trust in Him."

—(See "A Soldier's Faith.")

### III.—The Centurion's Reward.

Read verses 10 to 13.

1. *Jesus marvelled!*—that a Gentile should show such faith; while the Jews, the favoured nation, who had had prophets and teachers and the sacred Word of God to guide them, showed no faith like unto this Roman soldier (St. Matt. 15. 28).

2. The Centurion asks Jesus to *speak the word only*. Our Lord proposes to honour him by going to his house; and in this our Lord brings out the strong faith and deep humility of the soldier, that He may crown and reward him in the presence of the Jewish Elders (1 Sam. 2. 30).

3. The answer is given in the self-same hour, while Jesus spake (Isa. 65. 24). The servant, "dear to him," i.e., highly valued, was made whole of his palsy. A man grievously tormented (ver. 6) cured by the word of power which Jesus spake (ver. 13).

4. "Go thy way; as thou *hast believed*, so be it done unto Thee" (ver. 13). The active faith of the soldier won a bright reward. No medals on his breast so precious to him. The approval of Jesus will help him in the path of duty wherever that may be. How happy he must have been on his return to his house to find his faithful servant restored to health again!

#### LESSONS.

1. We learn in this miracle how great a power is *faith*. It is like a key to open the door of our hearts that Christ may shine therein. By faith we can bring to Him all our cares and our desires for ourselves and others (St. Mark 9. 22, 23).
2. We see how God honours intercessory prayer. It was so with Abraham (Gen. 18.).
3. We learn also that whatever is good in our daily occupation may, if rightly applied, help us in our Christian life. Whether as a soldier we learn *hearty obedience*; or as a servant, *faithfulness*; or as an apprentice, *diligence* and *patient service*; or as a scholar, *acquire learning*—each of these will have an effect on our lives; and as obedience and command were to the Centurion, so may our training and occupation help us in the service we should prayerfully seek to render unto God.
4. But remember, it will not be by our *learning*, or our *diligence*, or our *high position*, or our *humble life*, that we shall be saved. We must first have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, then those may be the means of teaching how to serve Him (St. Mark 16. 16).—See "*Beginning of Faith*."
5. Lastly, we learn here something of the infinite love and tender sympathy of Jesus. He had been on the mountain all night in prayer to God. He had preached to the multitudes during the day. As He descends from the Mount the leper cries, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean" (ver. 2). He was told of the centurion's servant, but did not see him; and He heals Peter's wife's mother, sick of fever (ver. 14, 15). In each case our Lord was quick to show His tender pity and to heal (St. John 8. 16).

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 9.

### Subject: THE SICK WOMAN & JAIRUS' DAUGHTER.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. |                  | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                         | ST. MATTHEW.     | <b>A SHELTERED PLACE.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| SUNDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 9. 1-13  | Consider what prayer is, and see how it cannot but strengthen us. He who stands in a sheltered place, where the wind cannot reach him, and with no branches over his head to cause a damp shade, and then holds up his face or his hands to the sun in his strength, can he help feeling the sun's warmth? Now, thus it is in prayer—we turn to God; we bring our souls, with all their thoughts and feelings, fully before Him, and by the very act of so doing we shelter ourselves from every chill of worldly care, we clear away every intercepting screen of worldly thought and pleasure. It is an awful thing so to submit ourselves wholly to the influence of God. But do it; and as surely as the sun will warm us if we stand in the sun, so will the Giver of light and life to the soul pour His Spirit of life into us. Even as we pray, we become changed into His image.— <i>Dr. Arnold.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| MONDAY                                                                  | ... " 14-26      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| TUESDAY                                                                 | ... " 27-38      | <b>THE TOUCH OF FAITH.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                                         | 2 KINGS.         | Theophylact traces a mystical meaning in this miracle. The complaint of this woman represents the ever-flowing fountain of sin: the physicians, under whom she was nothing bettered, the world's prophets and sages, who with all their medicines, their religions, and their philosophies, prevailed nothing to stanch that fountain of evil in man's heart. To touch Christ's garment is to believe in His Incarnation, wherein He, first touching us, enabled us also to touch Him; and on this that healing, which in all those other things had been vainly sought, follows at once. And if we keep in mind how her uncleanness separated her off as one impure, we shall have here an exact picture of the sinner drawing nigh to the throne of grace, but, out of the sense of his impurity, not "with boldness"—rather with fear and trembling, hardly knowing what there he shall expect—but who is welcomed there, and all his carnal doubts and questionings at once chidden and expelled, dismissed with the word of an abiding peace resting upon him.— <i>From Archbishop Trench on "Miracles," page 207.</i> |
| WEDNESDAY                                                               | ... ch. 4. 8-17  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| THURSDAY                                                                | ... " 18-37      | <b>HABIT OF PRAYER.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                         | ACTS.            | I never met with one who so habitually led others to God in prayer. I never remember seeing him on any business, or in any engagement to which we went together, without being invited to join him in prayer. A memorable occasion occurs to me. When we were on our way to a large meeting of the London clergy at Fulham Palace, at his suggestion we turned aside in the avenue, and between the trees we bent in earnest prayer for grace. This habit . . . seems continually brought to my mind, to show where my strength is, and what the Lord would have His servants do "in everything."<br>— <i>Life of Rev. W. Pennefather, page 281.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| FRIDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 9. 36-48 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                         | COLOSSIANS.      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| SATURDAY                                                                | ... ch. 3. 1-7   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

## Subject: THE SICK WOMAN AND JAIRUS' DAUGHTER.

(ST. MATTHEW 9. 18-26.)

Learn—St. Matthew, ch. 11. ver. 28.

### BRIEF SUMMARY.

- I.—The Cry of Faith.
- II.—The Touch of Faith.
- III.—The Joys of Faith.

**INTRODUCTION.**—In previous Lesson it was shown that our Lord had power to heal all sickness and disease of the body. His power over the sea is shown in stilling the tempest (ch. 8. 23); His power over Satan, in the casting out of devils (ver. 28); and now He is about to show His *power over death*, in raising the dead to life again. Jairus was the ruler, or Chief Elder, over the Synagogue, which the Centurion had built. He probably was one of those who besought Jesus to heal the Centurion's servant; and now his only daughter is sick and dying, he comes flinging himself at Jesus' feet—pleading for help. (See also St. Mark 5. 22-43, and St. Luke 8. 41-56.)

### I.—The Cry of Faith (ver. 18, 19).

1. A Father's Sorrow.—A little daughter (St. Mark 5. 23)—an only daughter (St. Luke 8. 42), about twelve years of age, who lay a-dying.

Jairus, the father, had waited anxiously for the return of Jesus across Sea of Galilee from the country of the Gergesenes (ch. 8. 28, and 9. 1). He hastens to the house of Matthew, where Jesus sat at meat, to tell Him of his sorrow (ver. 18).

2. A Father's Cry.—“My daughter is *even now dead*.” His only child dead or dying! His heart broken.

How tenderly this father had watched his child for twelve years—think of the birthdays and happy days gone by, and now his daughter is to be taken from him. He remembers what Jesus did to Centurion's servant. True, the *slave* was only *sick*, not *dead*. But he thinks of the wondrous miracles Jesus had done in Capernaum, so he goes with broken words, in great grief, to the Great Healer.

### 3. A Father's Prayer.

- a. He worshipped Jesus (ver. 18); he fell at His feet (St. Mark 5. 22); he fell down at Jesus' feet (St. Luke 8. 41).

(An illustration this, which shows that St. Matthew wrote for the Jews. It was not necessary to tell *them* that Jairus fell at Jesus' feet when he

came and worshipped Jesus: this was the manner of the Jews when presenting a humble petition.)

- b. “Come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live” (ver. 18). Compare 2 Kings 4. 8-37. (Refer to “A Sheltered Place.”) The cry was urgent, the faith but weak; and it is to be sadly tried presently.

### II.—The Touch of Faith.

1. A Woman's Sorrow.—Among the crowd who had been listening to our Saviour's words (ver. 10-17), there was one who eagerly drank in the meaning of ver. 12—that Jesus was the Good Physician.

During the twelve years of joy to Jairus and his little daughter, she had consulted many physicians, but all in vain. Her money was gone, her health was worse instead of better, and no cure could be found for her sad disease. At last she heard words that gave her hope of remedy, and she now resolved to seek for it (St. Matt. 11. 28).

2. A Woman's Faith (ver. 20-22).

She would now try the Great Physician. Who invited all to come unto Him, without money and without price (Isa. 55. 1).

## Ho. 9.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### How she showed Faith.

(1.) She had no money to offer, and she did not like to tell publicly her sorrow, so she pressed among the crowd, and said to herself—

(2.) "If I may but *touch* the hem of His garment I shall be whole" (ver. 21). (Refer to "*The Touch of Faith.*")

## III.—The Joys of Faith.

### A.—To the Woman.

1. In Believing. There is great joy in trust, in faith.

This sorely-tried woman may have learnt from Nahum i. 7, that the Lord knoweth them that trust in Him. Her faith was a living faith; her Scripture told her that the Lord is a stronghold in the day of trouble, and that He is good.

2. In taking God at His Word.

So she will not hesitate to *act* and *do* what her heart told her was true. To the stronghold she comes. It is enough, "If I may but touch" (ver. 21). Many others in that crowd touched Him (St. Mark 5. 30, 31), but none like her.

*Illustrate.*—Many go near to Jesus—at church, at school, at prayer—but few really come and take Him at His word.

3. In accepting the Blessing.

- a. She *feels* in her body the power of *healing* (St. Mark 5. 29).

Many have blessings sent to them in rich abundance day by day, but few *feel* as they ought, either in mind or body, that they come from God. They have no joy in their blessings.

- b. She *hears* the voice of Jesus.

Saying, "*Daughter* (ver. 23), be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee *whole*." And her disease is healed. We thus again see faith and blessing going hand in hand together. The crowds may touch Jesus, and run after Him or His ministers, but no faith, no blessing.

- c. She *realizes* the joy of peace.

She came trembling—now she falls low on her knees before His footstool (Ps. 99. 5), and may go forth with singing (Ps. 95. 1), the joy and presence of the Lord being with her.

"Go in peace" (St. Mark 5. 34). (Refer to "*Habit of Prayer.*")

### B.—To Jairus.

1. In the Presence of Jesus (ver. 18).

Jairus' faith sadly tried. He knew his daughter was near to death—if not already dead; and just when he had found Christ, and His steps were turned to the house of Jairus, another sufferer appealed to Him for help.

Yet Christ was *near*, and on *Him* rested his hope. Many a child will cheerfully endure pain if they can only lay hold of "*mother's hand*." Her presence sustains and comforts her child. Something like this did Jairus feel when Jesus accompanied him to his home.

2. In the Word of Jesus.

While our Lord spake to the woman, servants came and told the ruler his child was dead (St. Mark 5. 35, 36). "Why troublest thou the Master any further?" Jesus, seeing the *grief*, the sorrow of the weeping father, spoke comfortably to him. "Be not afraid, only believe." Compare Isa. 43. 1, 2.

3. In the Power of Jesus (v. 23-26).

- a. *In the home.*—The mourners, and minstrels, and people making a noise. Jesus speaks, "Give place"—that is, in the presence of the Lord there is no *place* or *room* for hopeless grief. Those who laugh and scorn Him have no place near to Him, here or hereafter (Prov. 1. 26).

- b. *In the presence of death.* The mockers are turned out, but the father and mother, His disciples—Peter, James, and John (St. Luke 8. 51)—witness the power of Jesus, who raises the child to life. He is very near to all, now, in death. To those who love Him He speaks kind and tender words. Perhaps His Holy Spirit whispers, "The Lord hath need of this brother, this sister, or this father or mother, in heaven"—and this comforts the sorrowing; and thus He fulfils His word in Isa. 61. 3.

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 10.

### Subject: MISSION WORK.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. |                  | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                         | ST. MATTHEW.     | THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| SUNDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 10. 1-15 | <p>"As I had come to the work one morning without my square, I took up a chip, and with a piece of charcoal wrote upon it a request that Mrs. Williams would send me the article. I called a chief, who was superintending his portion of the work, and said to him, 'Friend, take this; go to our house, and give it to Mrs. Williams.' He was a singular-looking man, remarkably quick in his movements, and had been a great warrior; but, in one of the numerous battles he had fought, had lost an eye, and giving me an inexpressible look with the other, he said, 'Take that! she will call me a fool and scold me if I carry a chip to her.' 'No,' I replied, 'she will not; take it and go immediately—I am in haste!' Perceiving me to be in earnest, he took it, and asked, 'What must I say?' I replied, 'You have nothing to say; the chip will say all I wish.' With a look of astonishment and contempt, he held up the piece of wood, and said, 'How can this speak? Has this a mouth?' I desired him to take it immediately, and not spend so much time in talking about it. On arriving at the house, he gave it to Mrs. Williams, who read it, threw it away, and went to the tool chest, whither the chief, resolving to see the result of this mysterious proceeding, followed her closely. On receiving the square from her, he said, 'Stay, daughter; how do you know that this is what Mr. Williams wants?' 'Why,' she replied, 'did you not bring me a chip just now?' 'Yes,' said the astonished warrior; 'but I did not hear it say anything.' 'If you did not, I did,' was the reply, 'for it made known to me what he wanted, and all you have to do is to return with it as quickly as possible.' With this the chief leaped out of the house, and catching up the mysterious piece of wood, he ran through the settlement with the chip in one hand and the square in the other, holding them as high as his arms would reach, and shouting as he went, 'See the wisdom of these English people! They can make chips talk! they can make chips talk!' On giving me the square, he wished to know how it was possible thus to converse with persons at a distance. I gave him all the explanation in my power; but it was a circumstance involved in so much mystery, that he actually tied a string to the chip, hung it round his neck, and wore it for some time. During several following days we frequently saw him surrounded by a crowd, who were listening with intense interest while he narrated the wonders which this chip had performed."—<i>Great Missionaries</i> (Rev. A. Thomson).</p> <p>From this simple incident the good missionary Williams was able to show the reasonableness of God speaking to His people through His written Word—the Bible.</p> |
| MONDAY                                                                  | ... " 16-33      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| TUESDAY                                                                 | ... " 34-42      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                         | 2 KINGS.         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| WEDNESDAY                                                               | ... ch. 5. 1-4   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                         | NEHEMIAH.        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| THURSDAY                                                                | ... ch. 8. 1-10  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                         | ACTS.            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| FRIDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 13. 1-5  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                         | EPHESIANS.       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| SATURDAY                                                                | ... ch. 4. 7-16  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

Subject: MISSION WORK.

(ST. MATTHEW 9. 35-38, AND CH. 10.)

Learn—St. Matthew, ch. 28. ver. 19, 20.

~~~~~

BRIEF
SUMMARY.

- I.—Preparation.
II.—Administration.
III.—Participation.
IV.—Anticipation.

INTRODUCTION.—It is generally understood that our Lord had now completed His third circuit in the cities and villages of Galilee, *teaching* in the synagogues, *preaching* to the people, and *healing* every sickness. The first journey is mentioned in St. Matt. ch. 4. 23-25; the second, in St. Luke 8. 1-3, and St. Mark 6. 6; and the third, as above, in ch. 9. 35-38. His disciples had witnessed His work, and now, under His instruction, they are sent forth to fit them to *stand alone*, when He should be removed from among them.

I. Preparation.

(Read ch. 9. 35-38.)

1. The field must be prepared.—“The harvest is plenteous” (ver. 37).

The harvest-field to which our Lord came was undoubtedly the whole world (St. John 3. 16); but in the *first instance* the Gospel is offered to the favoured nation, the Jews (Acts 3. 25, 26).

2. Prayer must be offered.—“Pray ye the Lord of the Harvest” (ver. 38). Our Lord was moved with compassion towards the multitude, who eagerly, and with much fatigue, followed Him.

Notice.—

1. How He honours prayer. Jesus asks His disciples to pray for a definite work—a work which belongs to God—that He will send forth labourers.”

2. How He honours His followers, making them co-workers with God (2 Cor. 6. 1).

“I will yet for this be enquired of” (Ez. 36. 37).

And so our Church teaches in one of her collects, that all work for God must be “begun, continued, and ended in Thee”—that God may be glorified, and souls gathered into the heavenly garner of everlasting life (Ezek. 36. 36, 37).

3. Example.—A good example is a great encouragement in preparing

for God's work. This our Lord sets before His disciples (St. Luke 6. 12). He continues all night in prayer to God before He chooses them, and calls them distinctly to the high office of Apostle, *i.e.*, *one sent*. (*Daily Portion*, Neh. 8.)

II. Administration.

(Read ch. 10. 1-23.)

This includes *men and means*, *instructions*, *spheres of labour*, *direction*, and *protection*, of which in this Lesson we can only refer to two or three.

1. The Men (ver. 1-5).—Twelve Apostles “called,” chosen of God, for a definite work. This was the first ordination of Christian ministers, and Jesus endued them with power against Satan's work and to heal the effects of sin (ver. 1).

He sent them forth (ver. 5), by two and two (St. Mark 6. 7). Probably sent in the order given. St. Matthew adds “publican” to his own name, showing the true humility which should adorn the character of those who labour for Christ.

2. Instruction.—Christ was the teacher of His own apostles. For three years they were under His training, that they might be

Ho. 10.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3. 17). (Read ver. 5-15.)

3. Direction—

a. Sent to *preach* and announce that the kingdom of heaven is at hand (ver. 7). That salvation through Jesus, the true Messiah, was near. (*Daily Portion*, Acts 13. 1-5.)

b. Sent to *heal*.—The Gospel, a message of healing to body and soul; those *dead* in sins, *raised* to newness of life; those *impure* in heart, made *pure* in life; and those *sick* of this world, given *joys* which never end. (*Daily Portion*, 2 Kings 5.)

c. Sent to the *lost sheep* of the house of Israel (ver. 6). This trial of the Apostles' ministry and teaching was to be near at home.

And it is the first duty of every Christian to show godliness at home. (ver. 32), in work and conversation (2 Pet. 3. 11), and brotherly kindness (2 Pet. 1. 7), and to seek to win for Christ all who have gone astray in mind and life.

The times of the Gentiles and Samaritans (ver. 8) had not yet come (Acts 1. 8).

Such were some of the characteristics of the first mission instituted by our Lord in Galilee, which may thus be summarised:—A *door* is open, *prayer* is needed. He must *call* the labourers, and give them the *message* and the *power*, and *show* the way to the *wandering, straying sheep*, far away from His fold—through sin and unbelief.

III. Participation.

(Read ver. 24-42.)

1. In Christ's sufferings and trials.—The disciple must not expect better treatment than his Master (ver. 24). St. Paul counted this fellowship as gain (Phil. 3. 10). Our Church teaches, "There should be no greater comfort to Christian persons than to be made like Christ by suffering patiently" (*Visitation of Sick*).

2. In the triumph of the Gospel (ver. 34-36).—A war against sin; *peace* only through victory. Sin must first be conquered, then *peace* and *joy* will reign.

3. In the fear of God (ver. 29-31).—Like Daniel and the three children of Israel, strong in the fear of God (Prov. 14. 26).

4. In the care of God.—"Ye are of more value than many sparrows" (ver. 31). "He careth for you" (1 Pet. 5. 7).

5. And that all believers may participate in this Gospel Mission for Christ.—A cup of cold water not lost (ver. 42). He knows and sees every thing (Prov. 5. 21). The butler may forget Joseph; God does not. He will say in the resurrection morn to many who little expect it, "I was hungry, and ye gave me meat" (St. Matt. 25. 35).

IV.—Anticipation.

1. In the Day of the Apostles.

Mission work, as narrated in the Acts of the Apostles, tells of—

(1) *Fruitful labour*—by St. Peter, St. James, St. Paul, and many others.

(2) *Holy zeal*.—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4. 13).

(3) *Joyful hope*—that the Lord would fulfil His will on earth, and come again from heaven (Acts 1. 11).

2. In our own Days.

The records of mission work in the nineteenth century also tell of—

(1) *Fruitful labour*.—The Church of Christ is deeply rooted in our own land, and throughout Europe, America, and the British Colonies. There are about 390 millions of nominal Christians throughout the world. (Keith Johnstone, C.M.S. Atlas.)

(2) *Holy zeal*.—The Churches of these countries vie with each other in sending Christian Missions to heathen lands—to India, China, Japan, Africa, North-west America, is the good news of the Gospel being carried by holy and faithful men, and millions now acknowledge Jesus who formerly bowed to gods of wood and stone. (*See "South Sea Islanders."*)

(3) *Joyful hope*.—Earnest prayer is ever ascending to God that He will hasten the time of the fulfilling of all things, and that Jesus may soon come again (2 Pet. 3. 11, 12). (*Refer to Daily Portion*, Ps. 72.)

St. Matthew's Gospel.

NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 11.

Subject: JOHN BAPTIST: HIS LIFE.

Daily Portions of
Illustrative Reading for
Teachers and Scholars.

Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.

ST. MATTHEW.

SUNDAY ... ch. 11, 1-15

MONDAY ... „ 16-24

TUESDAY ... „ 25-30

MALACHI.

WEDNESDAY... ch. 3, 1-6

ISAIAH.

THURSDAY ...ch. 40, 1-11

1 KINGS.

FRIDAY ...ch. 18, 17-40

HEBREWS.

SATURDAY ...ch. 11, 32-40

EARLY TRAINING OF JOHN BAPTIST.

It is to be remembered that John was born a priest—that is, belonging to one of the most learned and highly educated bodies in the country. All Jews had what would now be called a good common education—that is to say, they could read, write, and cypher; and were besides instructed in the sacred history, which was the history of their nation, in the requirements of the law, and in their obligations and privileges as members of the chosen race. But the priesthood received what was intended for, and was considered, a high education.

Such an education and training as belonged to his order Zacharias was not likely to withhold from his son—at least of all from a son of whom high expectations were entertained.—*Dr. Kitts.*

PERSONAL CONSECRATION.

An incident is related of a missionary and a proud and powerful Indian chief. The chief was convicted of sin. Trembling under a sense of guilt, he approached the missionary, and proffered his belt of wampum to be freed from his crushing fears. "No," said the missionary, "Christ cannot accept such a sacrifice." The Indian departed, but soon returned, offering his rifle, and the skins he had taken in hunting. "No," was the reply, "Christ cannot accept such a sacrifice." Again the Indian went away, but soon returned once more with a troubled conscience, and offered his wigwam, wife, child, everything, for peace and pardon. "No," was the reply, "Christ cannot accept such a sacrifice." The chief seemed oppressed with surprise for a moment, then, lifting up his tearful eyes to the face of the missionary, he feelingly cried out, "Here, Lord, take poor Indian too!"—*Dickinson.*

ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S DAY.

Where is the love the Baptist taught,
The soul unswerving and the fearless tongue?
The much-enduring wisdom, sought
By lonely prayer the haunted rocks among?

Who counts it gain
His light should wane
So the whole world to Jesus throng.

The Christian Year (Keble).

Subject: JOHN BAPTIST: HIS LIFE.

(ST. MATTHEW 11.)

Learn—St. Luke, ch. 7. ver. 28.

**BRIEF
SUMMARY.**

- I.—A Voice in the Temple.
- II.—A Voice in the Wilderness.
- III.—A Voice before Herod.
- IV.—A Voice from Prison.

INTRODUCTION.—After the issue of our Lord's commands to His disciples, we are called upon by St. Matthew to step aside awhile, and contemplate the life of a most remarkable man. John Baptist, than whom no greater was born of women (ver. 11), was now suffering imprisonment for the truth's sake. Let us consider his career up to this stage of his life.

I.—A Voice in the Temple.

1. This takes us back thirty years. (Refer to St. Luke 1.) An angel spake to Zacharias (ver. 13): "Thy prayer is heard;" a son is promised, and "thou shalt call his name John."
2. Go back 700 years and more, we find Isaiah (ch. 40. 3.) describing the character and duties of John—a voice crying in the wilderness.
3. And 300 years before Christ, Malachi, in ch. 3. 1. and ch. 4. 5. defines his position and office—a messenger preparing the way of the Lord.
4. The voice of the angel in the Temple at Jerusalem announces the birth of John, who would shine as a star, bright and clear (St. John 5. 35), until the Sun of Righteousness arise (Mal. 4. 2), the true Light of the world (St. John 1. 5-9, and St. John 8. 12).

II.—A Voice in the Wilderness.

1. Early Life of John.

- a. *Dwelt* in the hill country of Judea; removed from the busy life of the towns, trained specially

by his father, a priest of the Temple. ("*Early Training.*")

b. *Preparation for his office* (St. Luke 1. 15).—Self-denying, filled with the Holy Ghost—waxed strong in spirit.

c. *His habits.*—Dwelt in wilderness, sought no society (St. Luke 1. 80), fed sparingly, and was clothed in coarse raiment (St. Matt. 8. 4).

2. His Manhood.

a. At the age of thirty He goes forth from his seclusion to the banks of the Jordan, to proclaim the coming of the Messiah (St. Matt. 3. 1).

The kingdom of heaven is at hand (ver. 2); and to announce the true preparation of heart (repent, and be baptized) for the Lord's coming. (Collect: St. John Baptist's Day.)

b. He fulfils his office in great *humility* (St. John 3. 30, and St. John 1. 15 and 27) with wonderful *power* (St. Matt. 3. 5), by pointing to Jesus as the Lamb of God (St. John 1. 29), by sending his own disciples to Christ (St. John 1. 35-37).

3. God's approval of John.

(1.) Christ comes to him; God speaks to him (see Lesson No. 8). St. Matt. 8. 13-17.

Ho. 11.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

- (2.) Jesus *honours* him (ver. 11). John had abased himself to honour Christ (St. John 8. 29, 30). Now when his faithful service is ended, he receives honour from Christ (St. John 12. 26).'

- (3.) Jesus *commends* his work (ver. 12). "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence"—

Really means that the poor, and the despised of the land, through John's preaching, were *storming* the gates of heaven to enter in.

So we are taught that we must *strive* to enter in. We must wrestle like Jacob (Gen. 32. 26).

III.—A Voice before Herod.

1. Who was this Herod? A son of Herod the Great, who was a most cruel and wicked father. Josephus tells us that Herod the Great, who slew all the children in Bethlehem of two years of age and under, murdered his own wife and three of his sons.

Herod Antipas, one of his sons, was Tetrarch of Galilee, *i.e.*, ruler over a fourth part of Roman province. He married first a daughter of Aretas, an Arabian king (see his name 2 Cor. 11. 32), but afterwards, following most sadly the evil example of his wicked father, Herod induced his brother Philip's wife to forsake her husband and live with him.

2. He hears the voice of John (St. Mark 6. 20). He *feared* John; he *knew* John was a prophet; he *heard him* gladly.

3. He hears a faithful witness: "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (St. Mark 6. 18). Herod had broken the seventh commandment, and John, bold as a lion in the cause of truth, and as the messenger of God, fears not before kings. ("John Baptist's Day," *Keble*.)

4. He puts John in prison—in a dark dungeon, far away out of his sight; but an evil conscience gives him no peace in his sin (St. Matt. 14. 1-5).

IV.—A Voice from Prison.

(Read ver. 1-19.)

1. The wondrous works of Jesus reach the ears of John in prison. His faithful disciples are allowed to visit him. Their faith sorely tried. "If Jesus be the Christ" (think they) "why allow John to remain in prison?" To strengthen their faith, he sends them with a message (ver. 8).

2. The wondrous works *again* testify that He is the Christ (ver. 4 and 5. Comp. St. John 5. 36).

3. Although in prison, the visit of the disciples recalled to the remembrance of the multitude that John had testified of Christ. Read ver. 7-12, and comp. St. John 5. 32-35.

4. Who was John? A prophet (ver. 9). Then why not believe his testimony? They stood self-condemned.

5. They were like children at play (ver. 16-19)—they tire of one game, then try another—they reject the testimony of John, and they reject Christ.

6. And they will reap the woes and miseries of lost opportunities (ver. 20-24. Comp. St. Matt. 23. 37).

7. The voice of John from prison still points his disciples to Jesus; and our Lord gives practical effect to the testimony.

(1.) By the issue of His gracious invitation to souls overburdened with sin, or sorrow, or trial, or adversity, or lack of faith, or doubts, or imprisonment: "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (ver. 28-30). (Jer. 6. 16.)

(2.) So that all men, like John, may learn of Christ (Eph. 4. 20 and 26) to be *meek* and *lowly*, and ready to give up everything to promote His glory—to be nothing, that Christ may be glorified. (Refer to "Personal Consecration.")

Note.—"When an instrument is laid aside, God knows how to raise up many others in the stead of it. The work went on though John was in prison, and it added no affliction, but a great deal of consolation to his bonds. Nothing is more comfortable to God's people in distress than to hear of the works of Christ, especially to experience them in their own souls. This turns a prison into a palace. Some way or other Christ will convey the notices of His love to those that are in bonds for conscience' sake. John could not see the works of Christ, but he heard of them with pleasure."—*Matthew Henry*.

St. Matthew's Gospel.

NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 12.

Subject: THE SABBATH.

Daily Portions of Illustrative Reading for Teachers and Scholars.	Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.
ST. MATTHEW.	
SUNDAY ... ch. 12. 1-20	DR. FARRE'S TESTIMONY. Dr. Farre asserted before a Committee of the House of Commons that men who labour six days in a week will be more healthy and live longer—other things being equal—than those who labour seven; and that they will do better work, and do it in a better manner.
MONDAY ... „ 22-27	GEORGE III. ON SABBATH-KEEPING.
TUESDAY ... „ 28-50	During certain repairs of the Palace at Kew, one of the workmen, who was a pious man, was particularly noticed by His Majesty. One Monday morning the King went as usual to watch the progress of the work, and not seeing this man in his customary place, inquired the reason of his absence. There was hesitation in answering, but at last the King was told that this man alone had refused to work on the Sunday to finish a particular job, and in consequence had been dismissed. "Call him back immediately!" exclaimed the good King; "the man who refused doing his ordinary work on the Lord's day is the man for me. Let him be sent for." The man was accordingly replaced, and the King ever after showed him particular favour.—<i>Cyclopædia of Illustration.</i>
GENESIS. WEDNESDAY... ch. 2. 1-3. EXODUS ch. 16. 22-30	INFLUENCE OF SABBATH-BREAKING.
EXODUS.	A distinguished American merchant, who for twenty years did a vast amount of business, remarked to Dr Edwards, "Had it not been for the Sabbath, I have no doubt I should have been a maniac long ago." This was mentioned in a company of merchants, when one remarked, "That is the case with Mr. ——. He was one of our greatest importers. He used to say that the Sabbath was the best day in the week to plan successful voyages, showing that his mind had no Sabbath. He has been in the insane-hospital for years, and will probably die there." Many men are there, or in the maniac's grave, because they had no Sabbath. They broke a law of <i>Nature</i>, and of Nature's God, and found "the way of transgressors hard." Such cases are so numerous, that a writer remarks, "We never knew a man work seven days in the week who did not kill himself or kill his mind."—<i>Dictionary of Illustration.</i>
THURSDAY ... ch. 20. 8-11	
ST. LUKE.	
FRIDAY ... ch. 4. 16-21, HEBREWS ch. 10. 5	
ACTS.	
SATURDAY ... ch. 16. 13-18	

Subject: THE SABBATH.

(ST. MATTHEW 12, 1-14.)

Learn—Isaiah, ch. 58, ver. 13 and 14.

BRIEF
SUMMARY.

- I.—The Lord of the Sabbath.
- II.—The Rest of the Sabbath.
- III.—The Joys of the Sabbath.

INTRODUCTION.—Serious opposition to our Lord and His Ministry is now being stirred up by the Pharisees. Their consciences are ill at ease under His condemnation of their conduct in rejecting the testimony of John Baptist, whom, through fear of the people, they were obliged to acknowledge to be a prophet. And now on the Sabbath day they watch Him and His disciples, seeking a cause of offence with which to charge Him. After the plucking the ears of corn and the healing of a man with a withered hand, St. Luke (6. 11) says *they were filled with madness*; and St. Matthew (12. 14), *they held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him.*

I.—The Lord of the Sabbath.

(Read ver. 1-8.)

1. **The Circumstances.**—(a.) Passing through the corn-fields on the Sabbath day, Jesus was walking along by the ordinary path, bearing His hunger as best He might, while the disciples were pushing for themselves a road through the standing corn, by plucking the ears as they went along* (compare St. Mark 2. 23, and Deut. 23. 25).
- (b.) The Pharisees point to this act (ver. 2); *unlawful*, they call it.
- (c.) Our Lord points to the hunger of David, who ate the shew-bread (1 Sam. 21. 6). *Necessity* was David's only plea—David was not condemned, then why condemn His disciples? (Ex. 29. 33.)
- (d.) The priests also, in the Temple service, do many things which the Law forbids on the Sabbath. The Temple *excuses* them. There is *One* greater than the Temple here (ver. 6). May He not *excuse* His disciples?—He holds them *guiltless*, and shows that the works of necessity are lawful on that day.

(e.) The Sabbath was ordained in *mercy* for man's good: man's good not to be *sacrificed* for the Sabbath (ver. 7). God will have mercy, not sacrifice (Hos. 6. 6); also Matt. 9. 13, where Jesus first used these words in reference to the soul. He now shows that they are equally applicable to the body, and would have the Jews know that nothing in the ceremonial law must contradict God's great law of "mercy" to soul and body.

(f.) The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath (ver. 8).

2. **Result.**—Our Lord answered and defeated the prying Pharisees; but their defeat only enraged them more against Him, as seen through the remainder of our Lord's ministry on earth.

Their Rabbis, by their traditions, added to the law grievous restrictions too heavy to be borne, applying their rules to man, beasts, and things, and made it unlawful even to do good on the Sabbath day.

Now consider the Sabbath as at first instituted.

II.—The Rest of the Sabbath.

1. **Its Institution.**—(a.) "In the beginning"—created, *made* by God (Gen. 1. 1); blessed and sanctified by Him (Gen. 2. 8). The day was *used* by God—He *rested* on the *seventh* day (ver. 2).

* Bp. Wordsworth and others support this view.

No. 12.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

(b.) Made for *man*, not for Jew only—but made before there was Jew or Gentile.

(c.) Planned for man when he was *innocent*, before the fall, for his good in Eden—how much more needful now!

2. Its Obligation.—(a.) For the use of all men. When the law was given on Sinai, the Sabbath had existed 2,500 years; therefore the Fourth Commandment begins "Remember" (Ex. 20. 8), as if to recall its previous known existence.

(b.) Part of the Law of God—and therefore eternal. (*Daily Portion*, Ex. 30.)

First, written on man's heart and natural to a holy life, as in Eden before the fall. (*Daily Portion*, Gen. 3.)

Second, written on stone; like as man's heart is made so by sin, so must this law be impressed thereon (Ex. 16. 22-30).

Third, again written on man's heart by the Holy Spirit that we may fulfil the law (Rom. 13. 10).

3. Its Object.—(a.) REST in God. Yes! Rest in body and in mind. Rest from labour, worry, or anxiety. But more than this—it means *peace* to the soul—*trust* in God—and *restoration* of health and mind for new work in the week to come. Those only who follow God's commands enjoy rest (1 John 5. 3).

Even animal creation were to enjoy rest. And nations that do not practise it find much evidence of declension among their people, to warn them that their neglect of one of God's Eternal Laws is a fatal injury to mind and body.

(b.) Rest in the Lord (Ps. 37. 7).—Those who have heard Mendelssohn's beautiful music will remember that it is a *Solo* to which he sets those words, not a Chorus. The musician seems to teach just what the Bible teaches, that this rest must be that of an individual, not of a multitude. Each, alone, must rest and trust in the Lord. Each Sabbath day, to those who thus seek its blessing, becomes in the journey of life—

"* * * a port protected
From storms that round us rise;
A garden intersected
With streams of Paradise." *

This leads us naturally to the next step.

III.—The Joy of the Sabbath.

Illustrate.—Every child can tell of some joy which they call their own—"their very own," so they think. It may be a *birth-day*, with all its presents and happy faces and good wishes. Or it may be the return to a happy home, to a mother's loving arms, after a long absence. There is much to remember in each of these. But (*say to a child*) what is it that makes you so joyful? Is it not that your heart is full of some long-looked-for happiness, and you have been desiring something which would be quite *your own*? Now there are joys in the Sabbath, but only to those whose hearts are full of gratitude and love to Him the Giver of all that is good, and by Whose Holy Spirit they become "their very own."

1. We thank Him for the *day*, for on this day Christ arose from the dead.

He brought spiritual life on the *first day* of the week—our Sunday, or Sabbath day, like as of old the seventh day was the first day of the natural life of man on the earth. See one of God's promises to those who delight in His Sabbath (Isa. 58. 13, 14).

2. We call it the Lord's day (Rev. 1. 10).

"O day of rest and gladness;
O day of joy and light."

And it is especially the day on which those who love the Lord join in prayer and praise, and have communion with Him. (*Refer to "George III."*)

3. It is the day on which He *healed* the man with the withered hand, as if to show us all that "we, who have no power in ourselves to help ourselves" (Collect), may especially find Him very near to us in the House of Prayer to give us help in our time of need (read ver. 9-13, and comp. Heb. 4. 16). (*Daily Portion*, Acts 16.)

Let each ask—

(1.) Do I truly feel *joy* and *rest* on the Lord's day?

(2.) Am I seeking to do *any good* work for Him?

"This is the day the Lord hath made, therefore will we rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. 118. 24).

St. Matthew's Gospel.

NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 13.

Subject: THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

Daily Portions of Illustrative Reading for Teachers and Scholars.		Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.
	ST. MATTHEW.	A LANDSCAPE.
SUNDAY	... ch. 13, 1-23	A slight recess in the hill-side, close upon the plain (Gennesareth), disclosed at once, in detail, and with a conjunction which I remember nowhere else in Palestine, every feature of the great parable. There was the undulating corn-field, descending to the water's edge. There was the trodden pathway running through the midst of it, with no fence or hedge to prevent the seed from falling here and there on either side of it, or upon it; itself hard with the constant tramp of horse, and mule, and human feet. There was the "good" rich soil, which distinguishes the whole of that plain and its neighbourhood from the bare hills elsewhere descending into the lake, and which, where there is no interruption, produces one vast mass of corn. There was the rocky ground of the hill-side protruding here and there through the corn-fields, as elsewhere, through the grassy slopes. There were the large bushes of thorn—the "nabk," that kind of which tradition says that the crown of thorns was woven—springing up like the fruit trees of the more inland parts, in the very midst of the waving wheat.—<i>Sinai and Palestine (Stanley).</i>
MONDAY	... " 24-43	
TUESDAY	... " 44-58	
	ISAIAH.	
WEDNESDAY	... ch. 28, 23-29	
	ECCLESIASTES.	SOWERS OF WEALTH.
THURSDAY	... ch. 11	A late Scottish nobleman, accompanying a gentleman to the summit of a hill which overlooked his lordship's estates, after explaining that as far as the eye could reach the country was his property, stated, in reply to the remark, "Surely your lordship must be a happy man," that he did not believe there was, in all the vast circuit that met their gaze, an individual so unhappy as himself. The gaily Colonel Charteris found that ties of wealth were a poor substitute for a peaceful conscience. When dying, he said, "He would readily give £30,000 to have it proved to his satisfaction that there was no such place as hell." Still more miserable was the career of the well-known Elwes, the miser. When worth more than half a million, he wore clothes so ragged, that many persons, mistaking him for a common street beggar, would put a penny into his hand as they passed. He would pick up bones and rags. He would glean with his tenants in his fields, and complain bitterly of the birds robbing him of so much hay with which to build their nests. He, however, gained his end in life. He accumulated nearly a million of money, but found, when he had done so, that the object of his search was full of dissatisfaction. He would start from his sleep, exclaiming, "My money! my money!" His last hours were filled with gloom and anxiety. He died wretched and unhappy, possessing such extensive wealth, and yet finding it unable to supply the wants of an immortal spirit.—<i>The Mosaic of Life (W. Haig Miller)</i>
	GALATIANS.	
FRIDAY	... ch. 6, 7-10	
	ACTS.	
SATURDAY	... ch. 10, 34-48	

Subject: THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

(ST. MATTHEW 13. 1-9.)

Learn—Galatians, ch. 6. ver. 7.

BRIEF SUMMARY.	I.—The Sower.
	II.—The Seed.
	III.—The Planting :
	A.—Among Individuals. B.—Among Nations.

INTRODUCTION.—In the previous Lesson, and throughout chapter 12, it is seen that the Pharisees were taking concerted action against our Lord, to oppose Him in every way. (See ver. 14, 24, and 38.) He now withdraws to the sea-shore to escape their hostile attacks. Great multitudes still followed Him; and He entered into a ship and taught the people on the sea-shore, by parable.

The following grouping of the eight parables, thought to have been spoken by our Lord on this occasion, may be useful:—

Subjects.	Teaching.
The Seed sown	The Planting
The Seed that grew spontaneously (St. Mark 4. 28-29)	
The Tares	The Extent and Limitation
The Good and Bad Fishes	
The Grain of Mustard Seed	The Growth and Purity ..
The Leaven	
The Hid Treasure	The Excellence
The Pearl of Great Price	

Of the
Kingdom
of
God.

We have thus a Series of Picture-Teachings. One subject only can be taken in this Lesson.

Remarks.

1. Our Lord now changes His manner of speaking to the people. The disciples do not seem to know why, but the Scriptures must be fulfilled (read ver. 10-17), so Jesus speaks to the multitudes on the sea-shore in parables.
2. A Parable—what is it? "An earthly story with a heavenly meaning," is the almost universal answer to this question. A little boy, of nine years, was once asked the question, and not knowing the answer above quoted, he wrote down—"A Parable is explaining, putting clearly." This intelligent answer is like an instruction to a teacher to speak very plainly; and, bearing it in mind, let the teacher picture the scene by the side of the Sea of Galilee—the boats, the people, probably a man in a field close by sowing seed, and our Lord sitting in a boat speaking to the multitude. (Refer to "A Landscape.")

I.—The Sower. (See also ver. 18-23.)

1. Behold the Sower went forth to sow (ver. 3).
- (1.) Behold! St. Mark (4. 3) prefaces the parable with the word "*Hearken*," showing that our Lord addressed both the ear and eye, just as a teacher uses the black-board to convey knowledge to the mind of his scholars.

LESSON: *As we see the works of God in nature, the sky, the sea, the mountain, &c., hearken to their silent teaching. There is a parable in all of these to those who have a mind to see and understand the Will of God.*

No. 13.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

- (2.) "*The Sower.*" The article "*the*" (R. V.) shows that it was not intended to be *any* sower, but Christ Himself, *the Sower* (Isa. 28, 23-29).

And compare St. John 4, 38, when He says the disciples are to be sent to reap what He had sown.

Characteristics of the Sower.—He must have the Seed—must be trained, and know *how* and *where* to sow.

LESSON: *Our Lord is the Sower. After Him His ministers and teachers are sowers, doing His will* (1 Cor. 12, 28, and St. Matt. 28, 19).

- (3.) "*Went forth to sow.*" The sower goes forth of his own free will (St. John 10, 17, 18), with a set purpose (St. Matt. 18, 11), and with faith, that as there is a seed-time so will there be a reaping-time (Gen. 8, 22).

LESSON: *The missionaries and others who go forth to preach the Word must learn from the sower to be faithful, and patient, persevering, and bold in the work of the Lord.* (See Lesson No. 10.)

II.—The Seed (ver. 4).

This is explained in ver. 19 as the Word of the kingdom, i.e., the Word of God (St. Luke 8, 11).

We see in previous Lesson how the Pharisees had over-laid the Scripture by their traditions, and created burdens too heavy to be borne (St. Matt. 23, 4). On the sufficiency of this word, see Article VI. Church of England.

Characteristics of the Seed.

If unused it is like a dead thing; if sown it has *life*—it *expands*, has *power* to force its way through the hardest soil, and it *multiples*, and is destined by-and-by to cover the whole earth as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2, 14).

III.—The Planting.

A.—Among Individuals.

1. There are *three* states of heart which prevent the seed of the kingdom of God from bearing fruit:—

(1.) *The stubborn, or hard-hearted* (ver. 4, 19).

This is brought about by the way in which the hearer hardens his heart, by exposing it to every worldly enticement, until it becomes quite hard. When he heareth the Word "*he understandeth it not*"—he loses all desire for spiritual things, and does not really care for them.

- (2.) *The superficial, or faint-hearted*—have no root, can stand no trial; one day of the world's sunshine allures and enthralls them (ver. 5, 6, 20, 21).

These differ from the previous hearers. There is a *promise* of good things. They hear *gladly*, but for want of real faith good impressions soon fade away. The shining sun—a source of blessing in other circumstances—in this case scorches the blade, until it withers and dies.

- (3.) *The divided, or half-hearted.* Those who pride themselves upon making the best of both worlds, which ends in having no time for Christ (ver. 7, 22).

There is no particular fault in the soil in this case, but there has been sad neglect in preparation for the good seed. The *roots* of thorns are allowed to remain in the soil, and they soon grow up and strangle the good seed. The *cares* and *pleasures* of the world are the thorns that choke religious life. (Refer to "*Sowers of Wealth.*")

2. And there is only one condition of heart in which the seed when planted will grow, i.e., the *good ground, or true-hearted.*

B.—Among Nations.

But our Lord may have intended that His Word should have a prophetic and wider application than to individuals. If to nations?

1. Who were rejecting His Word? Who heard him, and yet pried into every motive, and doubted His Word?—The Jews. And their condemnation swiftly came upon them. It was in A.D. 70 that Titus besieged Jerusalem. About one million of Jews perished, and not one stone was left upon another.
2. Where were churches quickly founded, and yet soon became neither cold nor hot?—Asia Minor. (See Rev. 3, 14.)
3. Where were churches planted side by side with pride and great learning and riches, choking the Word?—Southern Europe, much of whose power is gone.
4. Where was the Word planted by the zeal and simplicity, the faith and courage of a St. Augustine, a Luther, a Wycliffe, a Cranmer, a Ridley, or a Latimer?—In north and west of Europe; and the Gospel from thence has spread like the small seed of the mustard tree, over the face of the earth, until, as stated in previous lessons, more than 800 millions of the human race acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ.

Let us pray to God to fulfil His Word, and take our hard and rocky and thorny hearts, and make them (as in Isa. 64, 4-8) fit for His Word to abide in, and to bring forth good fruit to His Glory.

St. Matthew's Gospel.

NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 14.

Subject: JOHN BAPTIST: HIS DEATH.

Daily Portions of Illustrative Reading for Teachers and Scholars.		Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.
	ST. MATTHEW.	PORTRAIT OF JOHN BAPTIST.
SUNDAY	... ch. 14. 1-21	He saw Jesus able to loose every seal, to unfold every mystery, to detect every snare, to brighten every darkness, to guide into all truth, and to form to all goodness; and in no hands could he leave the concerns of religion, and the spiritual interests of those to whom he had ministered, but in those of Christ. In the splendour of His grace and truth, John was happy to be darkened, and in such fame he was content to be forgotten. Had his honours been ten thousand times brighter than they were, he could have laid them all at Christ's feet. John in his ministry was not like the evening star, sinking into the darkness of night, but like the morning star, lost to our view in the brightness of the day. And he chose wisely for himself: for thus retiring, he has secured a fame brighter than the applause of the multitude could have given, and he is now in possession of an honour which can never diminish.—<i>Belfrage</i>.
MONDAY	... " 22-36	
TUESDAY	... " 15. 1-20	
WEDNESDAY...	" 21-39	COLLECT FOR JOHN BAPTIST'S DAY. Make us so to follow his doctrine and holy life, that we may truly repent according to his preaching; and after his example constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake.
	ST. LUKE.	REPENTANCE.
THURSDAY	... ch. 1. 67-79	He that repents every day for the sins of every day, when he comes to die will have the sin but of one day to repent of.—<i>Bishop Ryle</i>.
	ACTS.	TRUTH.
FRIDAY	... ch. 7. 54-60	"What is truth?" was once asked of a deaf and dumb boy. He moved his finger in a <i>straight</i> line. "What is falsehood?" He made a <i>zigzag</i> motion with his finger. Truth is the straight line—falsehood is the crooked way.—<i>Colton</i>.
SATURDAY	... " 12. 18-23	A SINFUL OATH. It is great sin to swear unto a sin. But greater sin to keep a sinful oath. Who can be bound by any solemn vow To do a murderous deed . . . ? —<i>Shakespeare</i>.

Subject: JOHN BAPTIST: HIS DEATH.

(ST. MATTHEW 14. 1-12.)

Learn—Philippians, ch. 1. ver. 12.

BRIEF
SUMMARY.

- I.—A War.
II.—A Feast.
III.—A Dance.
IV.—A Death.

INTRODUCTION.—Canon Farrar, in his "Life of Christ," says: "It must have been with His human heart full of foreboding sadness that the Saviour returned to Galilee. In His own obscure Nazareth He had been violently rejected. He had now been rejected no less decisively at Jerusalem by the leading authorities of His own nation." (See St. Luke 4. 29, and Lesson 12.) Scarcely had our Lord returned to "His own house" in Capernaum before the news of the dreadful martyrdom of John Baptist reached His ears. In this Lesson we must dwell briefly upon the circumstances which led to the cruel treatment and violent death of the great Forerunner.

I.—A War.

1. The Family of Herod the Great.

- (1.) After Herod's death his kingdom was divided among three of his sons.

Archelaus ruled over Judea, *Philip* over Iturea, and *Herod Antipas* was Tetrarch of Galilee.

The eldest son, *Herod Philip*, was banished from Palestine by his father, and he resided at Rome.

Aristobulus, another son, was the father of *Herodias*.

- (2.) *Herod Antipas*, Tetrarch of Galilee—a weak, cruel, sensual, selfish, and sinful man—married, in the first instance, a daughter of *Aretas*, King or Emir of Arabia. (See his name mentioned 2 Cor. 11. 32.) Like most princes of his time, he paid visits of ceremony at the Court of the Roman Emperor. On a visit to the Emperor *Tiberias*, he stayed at the house of his brother, *Herod Philip*, and there he not only abused the rights of hospitality, but cruelly induced *Herodias*, his brother's wife, to leave her husband, and return with him to Galilee.

- (3.) *Herodias*, who thus left her own husband, it will be seen had already married her uncle, and now leaves him to marry another married man, who was not only her brother-in-law, but also uncle by blood relation.

- (4.) *Salome*, daughter of *Herodias* and *Herod Philip*, left Rome with the guilty pair, became instrumental in the death of John Baptist, and at a later period following the evil example

set her by her parents and grandparents, married her great-uncle, *Philip* of Iturea.

Note.—(1.) A tradition mentioned by St. Jerome says *Salome* met with her death by falling through ice up to her neck in water, "and her head was parted from the body by the violence of the fragments shaken by the water and her own fall, and so perished. God having fitted a judgment to the analogy and representation of her sin."—*Jeremy Taylor*.

- (2.) *Herod Antipas* and *Herodias* were charged with treasonable practices, and were banished about the year A.D. 39 from the Roman court and exiled to Gaul, where they died in obscurity and dishonour.

See the end of another member of this wicked family.—(*Daily Portion*, Acts 12.)

This *Herod Agrippa*, who killed *James* and imprisoned *Peter*, was the brother of *Herodias*.

2. *Aretas* at War with Herod.

The King of Arabia was ignorant at the treatment which his daughter had received. She had fled to her father's country, without waiting for a divorce, and the king declared war against Herod to avenge the insult to his daughter. *Josephus* the historian tells us that this war ultimately resulted in defeat to Herod.

LESSON.—We learn a solemn lesson from this history, so far.—

No. 14.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

To beware of the first beginnings of sin! (1 Pet. 2. 11.)

Many a man on the gallows has been brought to confess that he owed his terrible end to the commission of *one sin*. (St. James 1. 14, 15.) The first *untruth*: the first *oath*: the first *theft*: the first *lustful act*: the first *neglect of prayer* or of *reading God's Word*, unrepented of, may lead to untold misery in this life and ruin in eternity.—(See on "*Repentance*" and "*Truth*").

II.—A Feast.

Herod kept his birthday at the Castle of Marcherius (it is supposed) during the war against his father-in-law.

A royal banquet was held, to which were invited "his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee" (St. Mark 6. 21).

Wines, fruit, and every delicacy which royalty could procure, were no doubt supplied after the Roman fashion in great abundance.

It was the fashion of the day to supplement their luxurious feasts with dancings or pantomimic displays.

III.—A Dance. (Read ver. 6-9.)

On this occasion Herodias and her daughter Salome had planned a great surprise.

A king's grand-daughter appeared before these nobles; and so pleased Herod with her dancing and graceful presence, that he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask (ver. 7).

Truly this was a "dance of Death."

IV.—A Death. (Read ver. 8-5.)

(1.) John Baptist was now in prison—confined in a dark dungeon, perhaps beneath the banquetting hall.

(2.) Why? *For the truth's sake*. Herod had pretended, in the midst of his great wickedness, to care something for religion. He frequently sent for John and heard him preach, and for his bold fidelity in condemning sin (ver. 4) Herodias got her husband to put John in prison.

(3.) The Jews disliked the immoral marriage. John had condemned it. For fear of losing her position, and

through revenge, Herodias had set her heart on accomplishing the death of her great enemy.—(See "*Portrait of John*.")

- (4.) Hence the wicked request of Salome (ver. 8): "Give me John Baptist's head in a charger!"—a most appalling and horribly reply!
- (5.) Picture Herod before his nobles.

The fear of man, "for his oath's sake and them which sat with him" (ver. 9), causes him to order a foul murder.

His pride and meanness and vice, stimulated by his unrestrained luxury and worldliness, led him to command the executioner to proceed to the prophet's cell. "Give me *here*," at once, in the presence of these nobles who dare to think ill of the conduct of Herodias, "John Baptist's head," who had dared to speak to Herod in this manner—"It is not lawful for thee to have her" (ver. 4).

And so in a moment the brave prophet, the faithful witness, was martyred to satisfy the inhuman revenge of two wicked women. Contrast Herod's feebleness with "*Portrait of John*."

Result of this Sin.

How true it is that "conscience makes cowards of us all."

1. His sin ever present to Herod (ver. 1, 2).

2. He hears of the fame of Jesus, and shudders at the thought that John (it might be) had risen again.

His sin had surely found him out (Numbers 32. 23).

Result of this Sorrow.

1. The disciples took the body, which tradition says had been cast out to the dogs, and decently buried it.

2. They went and told Jesus (ver. 12).

Human sorrow finds consolation in the assurance that the ear of Jesus is ever open to the cry of His people. "He heard of it," and went "apart." So now, in sorrow, He listens to the stricken and lonely ones of His flock, and in loving tenderness seems to take them "*apart*," making their sorrows *His own*.

"What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our cares and griefs to bear,"
(Isa. 53. 4, and St. Matt. 11. 28.)

St. Matthew's Gospel.

NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 15.

Subject: THE TRANSFIGURATION.

Daily Portions of Illustrative Reading for Teachers and Scholars.	Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.
St. MATTHEW.	THE SCENE ON THE HOLY MOUNT.
SUNDAY ... ch. 16. 1-20	Some other scenes might by the disciples be forgotten, but I am sure Mount Hermon never was. St. John many long years afterwards, when he wrote his Gospel, says, "<i>We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.</i>" And Peter, in his old age, when he was writing a beautiful letter to his converts, speaks of one place and spectacle which seemed to have fastened itself above all others in his memory. It was not the first look he got of Jesus on the banks of the Jordan; nor some incident in His home at Capernaum; nor the walk on the sea; nor the Temple at Jerusalem; nor Gethsemane; nor Calvary. What, then, was it? "<i>We were eyewitnesses of His majesty, when we were with Him on the Holy Mount.</i>" (2 Pet. 1. 16, 18).—J. R. Macduff
MONDAY ... " 21-28	
TUESDAY ... " 17. 1-18	
WEDNESDAY ... " 14-27	CHRIST AND PRAYER.
	Behold how Christ entered upon all His great works, with prayers in His mouth. When He was to enter into that great work of His humiliation in His Passion, He went into the Garden to pray. When He is to enter into this great work of exaltation in His transfiguring, He went up into the mountain to pray. He was taken up from His knees to both. Oh, noble example of piety and devotion to us!—<i>Bishop Hall.</i>
DEUTERONOMY.	THE TRANSFIGURATION.
THURSDAY ... ch. 34. 1-12	From this most remarkable event dwell upon the following lessons:—
2 KINGS.	1. The glory of Christ when He shall come again (Acts 1. 11). 2. The glory of the redeemed who believe on His Name. We shall be like Him (1 John 3. 2). 3. The certainty of a resurrection life beyond the grave; and that we shall know the Saints, and loved ones who have gone before. Peter needed not to be told who the visitors were. 4. That Christ, and those only who teach Christ and Him crucified, speak the words of eternal life. "<i>Hear Him.</i>" Not even a Moses or Elias, a saint or martyr, may take His place—Christ only. "<i>Hear Him.</i>" (1 Cor. 2. 2.) 5. That prayer is the power which opens heaven. God never fails to listen to the prayer of faith (Isa. 38. 1-5; Acts 9. 11, 10. 4. Compare 1 Tim. 2. 8, and Ps. 55. 16, 17).
REVELATION.	(See page 46.)
SATURDAY ... ch. 1. 10-18	

Subject: THE TRANSFIGURATION.

(St. MATTHEW 17. 1-13.)

Learn—1 John, ch. 3. ver. 2.

BRIEF
SUMMARY.

- I.—Prayer on the Mount.
II.—Transfiguration on the Mount.
III.—Heavenly Visitors on the Mount.
IV.—Conversation on the Mount.

INTRODUCTION.—Hitherto the teaching in St. Matthew's Gospel has had special reference (1) to the true Messiahship of Jesus, witnessed to by John Baptist, and by the Divine Voice at His Baptism (ch. 1-4.); (2) to His triple office of Prophet, Priest, and King—in His words, His works, and His power—as shown in ch. 5-16. Now the evangelist proceeds to unfold the true nature of His person, His kingdom, and His sufferings (ch. 16-24.), the subject being introduced by a question similar to that with which these Lessons commence (*see Lesson No. 1*)—"Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" (St. Matt. 16. 13). This was not a vain question. The disciples would naturally like to have replied that all men hailed Him as the "Messiah of the Jews"; but truth compelled them to give the answer in ver. 14. (Compare St. John 1. 5.) "But whom say ye that I am?" It is then that the Father reveals to Peter (ver. 17) that "Christ is the Son of God" (ver. 16). The faith of the three chosen disciples is to be further specially strengthened by the scene on the Holy Mount (2 Pet. 1. 16-18), which forms the subject of this Lesson.

I. Prayer on the Mount.

1. Jesus "took Peter, James, and John"—"to pray" (St. Luke 9. 28).

We here notice the special teaching of St. Luke, who particularly refers to this characteristic of our Lord's life—*Prayer*.—"Bishop Hall.")

2. The Time and Place of Prayer.

a. *The Time*.—Probably at night. The disciples "were heavy with sleep" (St. Luke 9. 32, and at ver. 37); "On the next day, when they were come down from the hill."

These incidents told by St. Luke enable us to conclude that the Transfiguration took place at night. How solemn the sight! No wonder that "they feared" (ver. 34).

- b. *The Place*.—Jesus and His disciples were at Caesarea Philippi (St. Matt. 16. 13), where the memorable conversation referred to in the Introductory Note took place. "After six days" (ch. 17. 1) He took the three disciples "up into a high mountain." St. Peter calls it the Holy Mount (2 Pet. 1. 18).

It was supposed, at one time, that the mount referred to was Mount Tabor, in Galilee; but St. Mark (ch. 9. 30) states that Jesus "passed through Galilee" at a later date; the

Mount of Transfiguration was, therefore, in all probability, Mount Hermon (Deut. 3. 8, 9. Compare Ps. 133. 3, and Isa. 38. 16), a mountain of more than 10,000 feet high, whose top is perpetually covered with snow, and situated near to Caesarea Philippi.—(*See "Macduff."*)

3. The Need for Special Prayer.

a. Refer to previous Lesson. Rejected at Jerusalem and at Nazareth; followed by the questioning scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem (ch. 15. 1), and again in ch. 16. 1, they seek cause of offence against Him. Hence one reason for special prayer—for help in time of need.

- b. When the disciples were asked "Whom say ye that I am?" (ch. 16. 15), and they replied that He was the Christ, the Son of God, they were in expectation of His becoming an earthly king, such a Messiah as the Jews wanted. But that He should be "killed, and raised again the third day" (ch. 16. 21); that self-denial should become the law of Christ (ver. 24); "no cross, no crown"—a law for Christ, and for those who followed Him; the whole world as nothing compared with the

No. 15.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

value of a single soul—these were rules of His kingdom which they could not understand (*Introduction*).

Hence another reason for special prayer, that God would encourage and strengthen them, by one glimpse of the "Glory that shall follow" (1 Pet. 1. 11).

II.—The Transfiguration

(ver. 1, 2).

1. The Scene.—Picture thus:—

It is night, no human footsteps heard, flocks now in the fold, birds at rest, the occasional cry of a wild beast, or a murmuring stream of melted snow rushing to the Jordan, may be heard. The stars and the moon may show the snow-capt mount in full view, soon however to present a scene of brighter glory.

3. As He prayed (St. Luke 9. 29).

(1.) Continue the picture—and see Jesus bent on the dewy grass, in prayer. See the "Man of sorrows" (Isa. 53. 3), despised, rejected; pleading with His Father, that He might be prepared for death; and for His disciples, that they might be strengthened and kept when they gazed upon the shameful Cross.

(2.) As He prayed He was transfigured, that is changed, so that His face shone as the sun, and His garments became white as the dazzling snow above them, or like light, shining like lightning.

(3.) Thus was revealed to the chosen three a glimpse of the past and future glory of their Lord and Master.

III.—Heavenly Visitors

(ver. 6).

1. The scene is now changed; the companion disciples had fallen asleep (St. Luke 9. 32), and in their stead appeared by the side of Jesus two men talking with Him.

2.

MOSES.

The great law-giver, who had seen the burning bush, who had waved the miraculous rod, who had stood in the presence of God on the Mount Sinai, in the midst of thunders and lightnings, leader of God's chosen people, died in the sight of the promised land, 1,500 years before.—(See *Daily Portion*, Deut. 34. 1-12.)

ELIAS.

Elijah, the great prophet, the faithful witness for the truth, (each had fasted forty days, like our Saviour), dwelt by the brook and fed by ravens, stood alone on Mount Carmel testifying for God, and at last ascended in his fiery chariot by a whirlwind into heaven more than 900 years before.—(See *Daily Portion*, 2 Kings 2. 1-11.)

3. These visitors testified by their presence—

(1.) That in Christ was fulfilled that which both the law and the prophets had testified.

- (2.) Also that Moses and Elias were probably intended as types of the Saints, who will appear with Christ in glory at His Second Advent—Moses of the dead and Elias of the living (1 Thess. 4. 17).

IV.—Conversation on the Mount.

1. Jesus, Moses, and Elias spake together (St. Luke 9. 31) of His decease, which He should shortly accomplish at Jerusalem.

They knew the meaning of that death and how much depended on it. As Old Testament Saints they had lived in the light of a promised sacrifice.

Moses and Elijah came from glory to talk about His death. Surely, then, sinners on earth must seek to glory in the death of Christ! This is the true faith of the living and the glorified.

2. Peter "spake not knowing what He said" (St. Luke 9. 33, and St. Mark 9. 6).

The disciples awoke, heard the conversation, and knew Moses and Elias, but were sore afraid.

"It is good for us to be here"—and so Peter, with an earnest and prompt desire, is content that Christ's kingdom shall be there on the Mount of Olives.

How blessed to mankind was it that this request was not answered! And so is it with many longing, short-sighted desires of the best of God's children. It is safest to say "not my will but Thine be done" (St. Luke 22. 42), for then we most honour God.

3. The Father speaks.

A cloud overshadows them like Shechinah of old (Ex. 40. 34, 35). The Father speaks, as at the Baptism. This is My beloved Son. *Hear Him* (St. Mark 9. 7), in whom all law and prophecy are fulfilled (Deut. 18. 15). The disciples are prostrate and filled with fear (ver. 6).

4. Jesus speaks.

His touch (ver. 7) of loving tender sympathy restores the strength of the affrighted disciples, and He says, "Arise, and be not afraid"; and when they lifted up their eyes they were alone with Jesus.

St. Peter, more than thirty years later, says, that in the Mount they were eye-witnesses of the Majesty of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that the voice of God came to Him from the excellent glory (3 Pet. 1. 16-18).

(For "Lessons," see page 46.)

St. Matthew's Gospel.

NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 16.

Subject: THE LOST SHEEP.

Daily Portions of Illustrative Reading for Teachers and Scholars.		Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.
ST. MATTHEW.		HOPE FOR THE LOST.
SUNDAY	... ch. 18 1-14	Lady Huntingdon was trying to lead the despondent brother of Whitefield to Christ. To her urgent entreaties he answered, "Oh, it is of no use! I am lost! I am lost!" "Thank God for that," said she. "Why?" exclaimed the man in astonishment. "Because," said Lady Huntingdon, "Christ came to save the lost; and, if you are lost, He is just the One that can save you."
MONDAY	... " 15-20	
TUESDAY	... " 21-35	
WEDNESDAY...	PSALM 23	
ST. JOHN.		PERIL OF THE LOST.
THURSDAY	... ch. 21. 15-17	Years ago, a man was benighted in a mining region. He lost his way. The darkness was dense, and dangers were thick. The next step might precipitate him down some awful shaft, some gloomy pit, and dash him, bruised and shapeless, upon its floor. He knew his peril, and he stopped, stood still, and began to cry, "Lost! lost! lost!" A cottager heard the sound, and, grasping a lantern, hurried forth to answer to the voice. Guided by the cry, "Lost! lost! lost!" he hastened over the moor. The lost man saw in the distance the glimmering of his light. It came nearer and nearer, until, as its rays flashed through the surrounding mist, he found that he stood upon the very verge of death. Another step would have carried him down the shaft, a crushed and mangled corpse! One step, one more effort to save himself, and he would have been lost beyond hope; another effort even to find his way would have proved his ruin.—<i>Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.</i>
ST. LUKE.		
FRIDAY	... ch. 7. 36-50	
EZEKIEL.		
SATURDAY	...ch. 34. 11-19	ROSALIE'S PRESENT.
It was the picture of a shepherd, with a very kind and compassionate face, who was bearing home in his bosom a lost lamb. The lamb's fleece was torn in several places, and there were marks of blood on its back, as if it had been roughly used by some cruel beast in a recent struggle. But the shepherd seemed to have suffered more than the lamb, for he was wounded in many places, and his blood was falling in large drops on the ground. Yet he did not seem to mind it; his face was full of love and full of joy as he looked at the lamb. He had forgotten his sorrow in his joy that the lamb was saved. In the distance were some of the shepherd's friends, who were coming to meet him; and underneath the picture were these words, printed in large letters: "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost."—<i>A Peep Behind the Scenes (Mrs. Walton).</i>		

Subject: THE LOST SHEEP.

(St. MATTHEW 18. 1-14.)

Learn—St. Luke, ch. 19. ver. 10.

~~~~~

| BRIEF<br>SUMMARY. | A.—THE PARABLE.    | B.—THE MEANING.       |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
|                   | I.—The Shepherd.   | I.—The Good Shepherd. |
|                   | II.—The Fold.      | II.—His Flock.        |
|                   | III.—The Wanderer. | III.—The Lost One.    |

---

**INTRODUCTION.**—Our Lord has now returned to Capernaum (ch. 17. 24), where He stays for a short time, prior to His visit to Jerusalem, at the Feast of Tabernacles. We have at the beginning of ch. 18. a picture of home life. Some were disputing who were the greatest. It is evident that at the house (St. Mark 9. 33-37) where Jesus abode there were little children. The Saviour took one and set him in the midst; then He folded him gently and tenderly in His arms, warning His disciples that unless they became humble like little children, and put away from them selfish thoughts, they should in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven (ver. 3). It is thus that St. Matthew introduces the Parable of the Lost Sheep. St. Luke (ch. 15. 1) adds, "Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him;" thus showing that His love goeth forth to the weak and to the helpless, to the timid child, or to the poor lost sinner, in infinite tenderness and compassion. (Isa. 40. 11, and St. Luke 19. 10.) The Pharisees and scribes, the appointed shepherds of Israel, murmured, saying, "This man receiveth sinners." Hence the striking significance of the Parable of the Lost Sheep.

---

**A.—THE PARABLE (ver. 12-14).**

**I.—The Shepherd.**

An Eastern shepherd is here alluded to (see Ps. 23.). He provides fully for the *wants* of the flock:—

For *rest*, he makes them "to lie down."

For *food*, they eat, at leisure in the "green pastures."

For *water*, he seeks out for his flock the "still waters," and

He *leads* his flock, going before them from place to place.

**II. The Fold.**

The shepherd calls them to the fold each night, where they would be comfortable and safe from danger of wild beasts and every harm.

The flock hear his voice, and he counts them all, one by one—he knows their number, and even their names.

**B.—THE MEANING.**

**I.—The Good Shepherd.**

1. Our Saviour leaves us in no doubt that under this figure He spoke of Himself (St. John 10. 11).

2. Jesus, the Good Shepherd—see how He describes Himself.

(1.) He *giveth* His life for the sheep (ver. 11).

(2.) I *know* My sheep, and am known of Mine (ver. 14).

(3.) I *lay down* My life for the sheep (ver. 15).

**II. His Flock.**

1. An hundred sheep (ver. 12). This was a familiar way of dividing and numbering among the Jews.

2. Ninety-nine left *in the wilderness* (St. Luke 15. 4).

This does not mean a desert, but their usual safe and good pasturage (see St. John 6. 10, and St. Matt. 14. 15).

### III.—The Wanderer.

1. On a certain day one sheep lagged behind—*the* self-willed sheep of the story. Though it had everything, it wanted its own way. Just like many a wayward child, who fancies it could be extremely happy if not controlled, and it were allowed to do what it liked.

2. So may we picture this foolish sheep—very hard to be always doing just what the shepherd wanted; not pleasant to be following his path all day and every day, and then at night to be shut up in the fold; so the chance came to lag behind. Finding itself free, it bounded and scampered away into "the world," to see what was to be seen!

3. It soon found out what it had never known before.

(1.) That it had *lost* itself.

(2.) That *hunger* was no friend.

(3.) That *thirst* was a terrible trial.

But still it wandered on among rocks and hills; when night set in, and fear came over the wanderer.

4. It heard the distant howl of the hungry wolf; and now the foolish sheep, weary and worn, thought of the shepherd and the fold. It had only strength for a few steps—a cry, and it fell into a thicket of thorns, too weary and weak to free itself; and there it lay!

5. Just then the shepherd had "folded" his flock, and counted only 99. His heart went out to the lost one, and shutting the door, said he—

" . . . This of mine  
Has wandered away from me,  
And although the road be rough and steep,  
I go to the desert to find my sheep."

6. He sought far and wide, and called it by name. He listened for the wanderer's bleat, and at last he found the lost sheep—too tired to walk, panting, and weary and worn. So the shepherd lifted it up on his shoulders, and carried it back to the fold.

Now let us turn to the meaning of the Parable.

*Note.*—First observe the *key-note* of the story—

"*THE SEEKING LOST OF GOD.*"

All the parts of the Parable are important, but subordinate to the one thought that the shepherd *sought* and *found* and *restored* the "WANDERER."

The scribes and Pharisees (see *Introduction*) murmured that our Saviour sat at meat with publicans and sinners: they did not and would not understand that the true Messiah was to be a suffering Messiah (Isa. 53. 4), and that He was come to seek and to save the wanderers (St. Luke 19. 10).

### III.—The Lost One.

1. *Cannot return.*

A sheep may wander, and might return, but a sinner cannot, without God's help, return to the fold (Isa. 64. 7; St. John 6. 44, 45).

*Sin* is the first step from God. It may appear only a little sin, a foolish act of self-will, yet it separates further and further from God every hour; and the sinner left to himself is lost for ever (Ezek. 18. 4 and 20).

2. *The Shepherd must seek for the Lost One.*

*Think of this Good Shepherd!*

(1.) The Incarnate Son of God, made flesh, that He might seek and save the straying ones.

(2.) Never weary of His task; abranched not from the thorns which wounded His flesh and tore His feet. He entered into every trial and sorrow and bereavement of life, "and seeketh that which is gone astray (ver. 12) until he find it" (St. Luke 15. 4).

3. *The Lost One found.*

(1.) "If so be that he find it" (ver. 13), that none may be *at rest* in their sins. "When he hath found it" (St. Luke 15. 5), is anything too hard for the Lord? (Gen. 18. 14)—as if to show that the vilest, the outcast, and the weakest, may yet hope that the Lord will be gracious (Isa. 30. 18, 19).

(2.) No emitting, no upbraiding, no complaining that the road through which the Good Shepherd hath travelled bears the marks of His blood-stained Cross; He doth not even drive the sheep back to the fold. He pities its weakness (James 5. 11; Ps. 103. 8), and "layeth it on His (own) shoulders" (St. Luke 15. 5).

4. *The Lost One brought Home.*

The Good Shepherd carries the lost one back to the fold, there to be safe under His care.

As the sinner without Christ is lost for ever, so the sinner found and restored by Christ is saved for ever (St. John 10. 28).

5. *Rejoicing in Heaven.*

(1.) He rejoiceth more of that sheep than over the ninety and nine which went not astray (ver. 12).

(2.) Heaven rejoiceth—"likewise joy shall be in heaven" (St. Luke 15. 7).

Angels sang joyfully at the birth of the Saviour (St. Luke 2. 13, 14).

Moses and Elias come down from heaven to talk to Jesus about His death for sinners. (See *previous Lesson*.)

The Father speaks, and is well pleased that His Son should accomplish the redemption of the world. (*Lessons 8 and 15.*)

Hence the joy that *one sinner* is brought back into the fold. The Father, saints, and angels join in the rejoicing over the recovery of

"*The Lost Sheep.*"

BLACKBOARD NOTES.

METHOD AND HINTS.

A.—PARABLE.

B.—MEANING.

1. The Shepherd.

- (1.) *Cares* for his sheep.
- (2.) *Feeds* them.
- (3.) *Leads* them to safe and good pasturage.

1. Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

*Learn*—"I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep" (St. John 10. 11).

2. The Fold.

- (1.) A place of safety.
- (2.) Well-fenced round.
- (3.) Sheep are called in every night.
- (4.) They are known and numbered.
- (5.) Strangers are not admitted—only those that belong to the shepherd.

2. The Flock of Jesus.

- (1.) At present are in the *wilderness*—this world.
- (2.) The fold of His Church—a fence to protect them.
- (3.) Called to the fold and named in Baptism.
- (4.) All known to Jesus, and belong to Him.

3. The Wanderer.

- (1.) One foolish sheep tired of shepherd's care.
- (2.) Longs to be free, and to see the hills and woods far away.
- (3.) One night it lags behind and wanders astray.
- (4.) Gets lost, trembles with fear, and hears the cry of the wolf.
- (5.) Cannot return, is weary and worn, and perhaps caught among thorns.

3. The Lost One.

- (1.) Many foolish children get tired of father and mother's care, and of the care of JESUS.
- (2.) Sin, however small it may seem, leads from God.
- (3.) The first sin, at night, or when alone, out of sight of earthly friends—just like foolish sheep.
- (4.) Sin repeated, may tremble at first—soon the world catches hold—the poor wandering boy or girl or man falls deeper and deeper and all seems lost.

4. Found.

- (1.) Shepherd misses one sheep.
- (2.) Goes to the hills to seek for it.
- (3.) Finds it, carries it back and restores the Wanderer to the Fold.

4. Jesus seeks for the Lost.

- (1.) *Learn*—"The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost" (St. Luke 19. 10).
- (2.) *Note*—Rejoicing in heaven when sinner is found (St. Luke 15. 7).

*Note*.—It will probably be the best plan to teach completely the story or Parable first, and then to follow out each detail of the meaning.

1. A Blackboard may be used successfully when the class is held in a separate room. Its use need not be confined to Junior Classes; neither should it be limited to written notes, or texts, or references.

*Maps, Diagrams, Sketches*, are most helpful adjuncts to teaching, and with a little practice will be found very attractive aids in Sunday-school work.

2. Although the Blackboard may not, from the necessities of the case, be of general use in Sunday-schools, yet the principle involved can easily be adopted in any class, by the use of a small slate, or pieces of paper, or memorandum book, which the teacher can use for his notes or illustrations.

3. The principal gain in adopting the system is—

- (1.) The art of teaching by the use of the eyes of the scholars as well as their ears. It is quite a common observation to notice that things *seen* are better remembered than things *told*; but when both faculties are combined there must be immense advantage in imparting instruction.

- (2.) Compulsory preparation of lesson. No one can write orderly notes without care and study. Spoken lessons sometimes mean unprepared lessons.

4. The notes on the Blackboard should be brief and orderly; should be written, not before the Lesson begins, but as it proceeds, step by step. The teacher as a rule will stand to teach when using the Blackboard.

5. Occasionally an advanced scholar may be rewarded by being allowed to write the notes, either dictated by teacher or as deduced from the class.

6. The board should be placed at such an angle that all may see, and so also that the teacher may, even when writing, see the scholars—at the right hand, facing the class, is the position for the board.

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 17.

### Subject: THE RICH YOUNG RULER.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| St. MATTHEW.                                                            | <b>SELF-KNOWLEDGE.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| SUNDAY ... ch. 19. 1-15                                                 | The demand ("sell all that thou hast"), great though it seems, was exactly suited to the particular case. It was a special test in a special instance, though underneath it lay the unconditional self-sacrifice and self-surrender for Christ, required from all His disciples. It could not fail to bring the young man to a clearer self-knowledge, and thus to a wholly new conception of what true religion demanded. The only way to lead him to a healthier moral state was to humble him, by a disclosure of weakness hitherto unsuspected. He had fancied himself willing to do whatever could be required; he could not see if he really were so; he had thought he cared for nothing in comparison with gaining heaven; he could now judge for himself if he had not erred.— <i>Gettie</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| MONDAY ... " 16-22                                                      | <b>THE FEAST OF TABERNALES.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| TUESDAY ... " 23-30                                                     | In the month of October many people were preparing to go up to Jerusalem, to attend the <i>Fest of Tabernacles</i> . This feast was what we might call the Jews' "Harvest Home." It took place when all the crops of the year were gathered in, and before the winter rains began to fall. The corn was housed, the grapes were plucked from the terraced vineyards, the olives were shaken from the olive-trees, and the olive-oil stored up in jars. It was a feast of thanksgiving to God, who had crowned the year with His goodness, and made all its paths drop fatness. Nor was this its only design. It was intended also to remind the Jewish people of the long wanderings of their fathers in the wilderness, when they dwelt in tents, and of God's gracious care of them there. It was the gladdest by far of the Jewish festivals. At the other great festivals the people used bumes made of goats' hair, similar to what the Arabs dwell in to this day. But they were not allowed to have them now. They lived in arbours made of olive and willow, pine, myrtle, and palm.— <i>Dr. McDuff</i> . |
| 2 TIMOTHY.                                                              | <b>A PRAYER.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| WEDNESDAY... ch. 1. 1-7                                                 | (Found in the Memorandum Book of Henry Kirke White. Born 1765. Died 1806.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| THURSDAY ... " 8. 14-17                                                 | Lord, give me a heart to turn all knowledge to Thy glory, and not to mine. Keep me from being deluded with the lights of vain philosophy. Keep me from pride of human reason. Let me not think my own thoughts, nor dream my own imaginings, but in all things, acting under the good guidance of Thy Holy Spirit, may I live in all simplicity, humility, and singleness of heart, unto the Lord Jesus Christ, now and for evermore.—Amen.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| ACTS.                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| FRIDAY ...ch. 16. 25-34                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| PROVERBS.                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| SATURDAY ...ch. 11. 23-31                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

Subject: THE RICH YOUNG RULER.

(ST. MATTHEW 19. 16-30.)

Learn—1 Timothy, ch. 6. ver. 10.

BRIEF  
SUMMARY.

- I.—Seeking the Truth.  
II.—Hearing the Truth.  
III.—Rejecting the Truth.

INTRODUCTION.—The Feast of Tabernacles (the Jewish harvest festival, held in the month of October or beginning of November) was now over; also the Feast of Dedication, held about the middle of December—at the first of which, “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink” (St. John 7. 37); and at the latter, He solemnly proclaimed His unity with the Father, “I and My Father are one” (St. John 10. 30). On both occasions the Jews took up stones to stone Him (St. John 8. 59, and 10. 81). So now in the last three months of His life on earth He is driven again from Jerusalem, and passes over to Bethany beyond Jordan (St. John 10. 40), where the incident occurs which forms the subject of this Lesson. Truly might it be said, “He came unto His own and His own received Him not” (John 1. 11).

I.—Seeking the Truth.

1. The Truth-seeker (ver. 16). “And behold! He came.”

(1.) In the verses (18-15) preceding, the touching and instructive account is given of Christ blessing little children.

Our Saviour had been cruelly treated at Jerusalem. Many, however, resorted unto Him (St. John 10. 41). The disciples seem impatient that His time and attention should be taken up by a crowd of mothers and little children (ver. 13). But Jesus, who came to be the “Friend of little children,” could not be wearied in well-doing. “Suffer the little children to come unto Me,” said He, and He folded them in His arms; He laid His hands upon them; He blessed them.

(2.) Then when He was about to move, and depart thence (ver. 15). “Behold,” says St. Matthew, as if to call attention to something very special, “the young man” (ver. 20). “There came one running,” says St. Mark (10. 17). “A certain ruler,” says St. Luke (18. 18)—“very rich” (ver. 23).

(3.) So we gather from the three evangelists that this young man of great wealth and high position, who had probably witnessed the ill-treatment of Jesus in the Temple, seemed con-

victed of having lost an opportunity of speaking to Him, and now eagerly hastens to Perea, the country beyond the Jordan, that he might seek an interview before He had gone, and it was too late. At the two Feasts the young ruler had lost his opportunity; he now hastens to make amends.—(See “Feast of Tabernacles.”)

2. His Manner of Seeking.

(1.) He was in earnest. He came “running, breathless, eager.”

(2.) He was respectful, and not ashamed to show his religion before others. “He kneeled” before Jesus (St. Mark 10. 17).

And although it is evident from the conversation that this kneeling was not an act of worship, it clearly showed the anxiety of his heart, and his reverence to Jesus as a great teacher.

3. His Question.

“Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” (ver. 16), or *inherit* eternal life (St. Mark 10. 17, and St. Luke 18. 18).

4. His Character.

(1.) This young man was amiable, kind, just, and generous—had tried to fill his position in life with credit, and to discharge every known obligation, and to live in the good opinion of his fellow-men.

Yet he was not satisfied!

## No. 17.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

(2.) Perhaps he may have heard the cry on the Temple steps (*see Introduction*), "If any man *thirst*," and he was *unsatisfied*. Nothing which he could do would give him *rest*. He *thirsted* for the truth; and remembering the words "Let him come unto Me and drink," he hastened to the Saviour's feet, to put his question to Him.

(3.) The young man had trusted in his own works and merits hitherto. He had not learnt the lesson of the "Lost Sheep." *Self to be nothing, Christ to be everything*. So he thought it was just to do some *good* thing—something new, more than he had hitherto known of, or attempted; then he would no more *thirst*!

"Oh to be nothing, nothing!

Only to lie at His feet;

A broken and emptied vessel

For the Master's use made meet."

It would indeed be well for all—for every child, teacher, and parent, and would have been well for the rich young ruler had he been able—to say, with humility and faith, these beautiful lines. (*See also Collect for Sexagesima.*)

### II.—Hearing the Truth.

#### 1. The Truth Spoken.

(1.) Jesus, who knows the secrets of the heart, at once saw that the young man was putting all upon moral goodness.

Also that He talked very much like other young men do about *inheritance*, and taking possession of something for themselves, as if by right of birth. Yet our Saviour treats him kindly, and with deep interest and sympathy.

(2.) Notice the wisdom in dealing with the young man. Jesus takes him first on *his own ground*.

He had thought of Jesus as only a learned Rabbi, very salutary in character it is true. But, says Jesus (paraphrasing His language), God only is good; no man, be he ever so learned or pious, can add to God's words; therefore let us see what God says, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (ver. 17).

#### 2. The Truth Doubted and Questioned.

(1.) The young ruler cannot believe that Jesus refers to the Ten Commandments. The Jews had added many of their own too hard to be borne. (*See Lesson No. 12.*) So he questioned Jesus again, and asked "which?" (ver. 18.)

(2.) Our Lord refers the ruler to the second table of the Law—duty to parents, love to our neighbour, purity, honesty, truthfulness, contentment with our own and not coveting what belongs to others.

(3.) *Self-deceived*, he replied, "All these have I kept from my youth up" (ver. 20), and even challenges Jesus to point out any failing: "What lack I yet?"

#### 3. The Truth Applied.

(1.) Our Lord looks lovingly upon the young man (St. Mark 10. 21). He was evidently no hypocrite, although self-deceived.

(2.) The love of Jesus for this young man leads Him to apply the truth *home*. There was a canker of pride and of self-righteousness which needed deep probing. "One thing thou lackest" (St. Mark 10. 21). And in effect Jesus said to him, "Thou hast professed obedience to God. There can be no true obedience, unless the heart is willing to fully surrender its own will to God's will. 'Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me'" (ver. 21).—(*See "Self-Knowledge."*)

### III.—Rejecting the Truth.

#### 1. The Effect on the Young Man (ver. 22).

He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. He was silenced, and spoke not another word. A cloud sat on his knitted brow, of disappointment and chagrin, not unlike Naaman of old (2 Kings 5. 11).

He was offered treasures in heaven (ver. 21). But, sad to say, he *refused*, and we hear of him no more in the Gospel story!

How terrible to think of the good beginnings and fearful endings of many a well-trained youth, who finds his pleasure in the things of time. (*Learn the "Prayer of Henry Kirke White."*)

#### 2. The Effect on the Disciples.

"Jesus looked round about"

(St. Mark 10. 23) as if in sadness—

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."

(1.) *An Alarm* among the disciples. They had left all, not much to boast of, yet their all, said Peter (St. Mark 10. 26). And there was Nicodemus and a Joseph of Arimathea, rich rulers, what was the hope for them?

(2.) *An Encouragement* (ver. 26). With God all things are possible; and adds "Children, it is the *trust* in, not the *use* of, riches which makes it *hard*" (St. Mark 10. 24). And He encourages them by saying that there can be no true self-sacrifice for him which shall not bring with it its hundredfold reward (ver. 24).

(3.) *A Warning!* (ver. 30) But many of the first shall be last, and the last first, in His kingdom.

This forms the chief point of the next Lesson.

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 18.

### Subject: LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>St. MATTHEW.</b>                                                     | <b>BUSY YET DEVOUT.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>SUNDAY</b> ... ch. 20. 1-16                                          | <p>I doubt not we shall find it is much more easy to preserve a deep spirit of piety in the midst of a life of active pursuit, however laborious and engrossing, than in a life of indolence. God never intended that we should pass our lives on earth without active exertion; and hence he who sets out in life with the intention of doing nothing, will soon find that he is of all beings the most wretched. God has so made our minds, that they cannot be happy without employment; and hence there is no dream more foolish, none from which men awake with a more painful sense of their folly, than that with which the young are apt at times to delude themselves, that happiness is to be found in leisure from all difficult employment. But a very little experience will soon convince them that, if they give up active habits, they have taken the sure road to make themselves miserable. God, when He created man, did not endow him with all his wonderful faculties of intellect and moral feeling, without intending that they should be called forth and vigorously exercised; and our Lord and Saviour did not leave heaven and die upon the cross to save those who are content to live the life of vegetables, as if they had nothing to do on earth but to subsist and die. Difficult as it is, then, to serve God in the midst of business, it is much more difficult to serve Him in indolence.—<i>Archbishop Till.</i></p> |
| <b>MONDAY</b> ... " 17-28                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>TUESDAY</b> ... " 29-34                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>1 CORINTHIANS.</b>                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>WEDNESDAY</b> ... ch. 3. 1-11                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>HEBREWS.</b>                                                         | <b>LABOURERS FOR "ONE HOUR."</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>THURSDAY</b> ... ch. 6. 9-20                                         | <p>In the short space of eighteen months did nine of the band of missionary recruits, sent forth by the C.M. Society to Sierra Leone at the close of the year 1823, fall in the battle-field.</p> <p>The tidings of the early deaths of Mr. and Mrs. Palmer, Mr. and Mrs. Vaughan, and others, so far from deterring, only stirred up fresh volunteers, both in England and Germany, to come forward and help to fill up the broken ranks of the missionary army.</p> <p>"You have suffered a great and irreparable loss," writes the Principal of the College at Basle to the secretary, "in the death of our dear and lamented Johnson. Our missionary house is mourning for the decease of such a hero in the Israel of God.</p> <p>... There was a remarkable movement in our camp when the news reached us. Every one of our brethren was preparing himself, by the most serious meditations, to come forward and to offer himself as a sacrifice for the Lord. Should many more such tidings of an immortal world arrive, we could no longer detain our dear brethren-soldiers from going to the spot where the heroes of the Church are fallen."—<i>Abridged from "The Finished Course."</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>St. LUKE.</b>                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>FRIDAY</b> ... ch. 19. 11-27                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>ISAIAH.</b>                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>SATURDAY</b> ... ch. 40. 9-11                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## Subject : LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD.

(ST. MATTHEW 20. 1-15.)

Learn—Hebrews, ch. 11. ver. 6.

### BRIEF SUMMARY.

- I.—Called to Work.
- II.—Humility in Work.
- III.—Reward for Work.

**INTRODUCTION.**—The heart-searching and the distress of Christ's followers, as shown in the words from previous Lesson, "Who then can be saved?" led our Saviour to teach, and solemnly warn His disciples, that the Kingdom of Heaven was not a thing of merchandise, that could be exactly bargained for. In the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard He would have them see that the Divine Householder chooses His own labourers—that He is not limited in the bestowal of the reward, and that *many* of the first might be *last*; that even the Gentiles might stand before the Jews in His kingdom, the Publicans before the Pharisees, young converts before apostles—or the Christian inhabitants of Tinnevely, or of New Zealand or other heathen lands, before the more favoured peoples of Asia, of Europe, of England, or America. The first to receive the blessings, or to be employed in the most honourable service for God, may not be those who value most highly the privilege. The Lesson speaks of work in the vineyard; but the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong.

### I.—Called to Work.

#### 1. Who calls? (ver. 1.)

(1.) The householder—the Lord Himself. The work is His. The vineyard, His Church. The labourers, *they* whom *He* seeks, not *they* who *first seek Him*. "You have not chosen Me, I have chosen you" (St. John 15. 16, 1. Tim. 1. 12).

(2.) God calls; man may refuse, e.g., a wayward child, like the lost sheep, hears His voice, and may accept His help and guidance—a young ruler, who can only follow when God's will does not cross his own will, may *refuse* employment in the heavenly vineyard. (See previous Lesson.)

#### 2. Who are called? (ver. 2-7.)

(1.) *Nations* have their call. The heathen, to whom the missionaries go forth, and to whom the Gospel is preached, have their call.—(See "Introduction.")

(2.) *Individuals*—every man, woman, and child who have been baptized and admitted to Church membership, or have had the message of glad tidings addressed to them, have had their call.

#### 3. When called?

(1.) "Early in the morning" (ver.

1). The *first hour* of the Jewish day corresponded to our six o'clock in the morning. (A little child baptized into Christ's Church is called early into His vineyard.)

(2.) Again at the *third hour* (nine o'clock with us); again at the sixth and ninth hours (mid-day and three); and once more at the eleventh hour, or five o'clock in the afternoon, the householder went out and engaged those standing idle.

At six o'clock the day's work finished, and according to Jewish law the work of the day must be paid for the same evening (Deut. 24. 15).

*Note.*—1. It would appear that as so many labourers were employed the scene of the Parable refers to the season of vintage at the end of the autumn.

2. And it may be further noted that the *standing idle* may include not only the really idle and careless in this life, but even those whose labour has no reference to Christ and His Church.

3. Even Christian work, chosen by ourselves, may not just be the work in the Master's vineyard.

"Here am I, send me" (Isa. 6. 8), tells of the willing heart, ready to obey the Master's call.

Listen to His voice, like Samuel, "Speak, for Thy servant heareth" (1 Sam. 3. 10); and even a child may learn to do the will of the Lord.

## II.—Humility in Work.

### 1. Now recall the scene in previous Lesson.

A young ruler—apparently a promising disciple, who wished to do some great thing and inherit eternal life. When called by the Lord to "choose whom he would serve"—Christ or the world—he parted with the Saviour and clung to his wealth.

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven." These words of Jesus filled the minds of the disciples with wonder and alarm! Peter's words, pharisaic-like, "Lord, we are not like this young ruler, we have left all, what shall we have?" led our Lord to speak this Parable, showing that the first condition of acceptable work in God's sight is the true surrender of man's will to God's will, and true *humility* of heart.

### 2. Humility. How shown?

(1) *In obedience.* The workers in the vineyard do not appear to have failed in this respect. All obeyed the call, and did the work required of them.

(2) *A hearty service.*

No complaint is made as to the way in which the work was done, or that there was any lack of respect to the owner of the vineyard.

(3) *A thankful spirit.*

Many have learnt in an earthly position of life to render *obedience*, and even give a *hearty service*; but *thankfulness* in being allowed to work, and thinking nothing of reward or of advancement above your fellows, is not so easy. A joyful, thankful service is the keynote of the Parable.—(See "*Busy yet Devout*,")

## EXPLANATIONS.

1. "Early in the morning" (ver. 1). The Lord is ever on the watch over His people. (Ps. 121. 3, 4; Ex. 14. 24; Lam. 3. 23; Job 7. 17, 18.)
2. "Went out . . . to hire" (ver. 1). How gracious and tender the Lord is. He needeth not the help of any; yet, by parable, He teaches that He, as it were, needs the help of His people. (The market cross, as the place of hiring, will be a familiar illustration to many country children.)
3. "A penny" (ver. 2), the Roman coin "denarius"—equal to about sevenpence-halfpenny of our money.
4. "Vineyard" (ver. 2). The most valuable property in the East, and required great care and attention and labour—a fitting type of His kingdom (ver. 1).
5. "Hire" (ver. 3). The wages paid for the labour in the vineyard.
6. "Last" . . . "first" (ver. 16). Many who are *first* in quantity of work may be *last* in quality and reward.
7. "Called . . . chosen" (ver. 16). As at a school entrance many go—one is "*chosen*" to carry the flag as a reward for past conduct.

## III.—Reward for Work.

*Note.*—The Parable seems spoken (1) of *genuine disciples*, that is, those who are truly "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom" (see Catechism); but distinguishes those who "serve the Lord with gladness," and those whose faith and service are marred with self-righteousness.

(2) It also seems to refer to *reward* in this life, as well as in the world to come; and shows that those who serve *in love* now, and who think nothing about their "hire," have a reward of joy unknown to any other service—and *that joy* is in the present life.

### 1. Reward to the first.

The *first* are those who are *chief* in position, who agreed to serve for so much. The danger to them is great, lest they think too much of the reward.

Like Peter—"What shall we have?" Many think the chief aim of life is to be *saved* at last. This is the reward they look forward to. This is like those who bargained for a *penny*. There is a higher aim than this.

### 2. Reward to the last.

To those who are prepared to accept whatever the *Householder* is pleased to bestow. These are child-like, simple, humble, and thankful. This is true service.

It was to teach the disciples this humility of service that our Lord took up a child, on this occasion, and set him in the midst, and blessed the child; showing them that those who serve and follow Him must be trustful and faithful—"for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Our Lord does not say "*all*," but "*many*" that are first shall be last, and so teaches a lesson of warning to His disciples.

## LESSONS & ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. The martyr St. Stephen suffered much for Christ. He was *first* too in this suffering; but had he thought of the reward only instead of seeking to glorify God, he would be among the *last* when the great Householder comes.
2. Teaching in Sunday-school, quiet, diligent, attentive, work at home, visiting the poor, giving of our means for God's work at home and abroad, all these may be humble and acceptable services, and, as such, may be like the *last* in the parable; yet if done with a single eye to God's glory they would be among the *first* in reward now and when the great Householder comes.
3. Each labourer in the vineyard is paid the same, but those who have a contented, thankful, loving mind towards Christ will be among the *first* in the great day of reward. They are the "*chosen*," or the truest followers of Christ, and have a double reward.
4. Each has a work to do. There are no idlers in His vineyard. Jesus calls. "Hear Him! How sad if we at last are found serving another master, whose reward is destruction!"  
Remember.
5. The true spirit of a worker is *Love* to the Master. No self-merit, but the earnest desire to serve Him in Love.—(See "*Labourers for 'One Hour'*,")

## No. 18.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### GENERAL DIRECTIONS AS TO USE OF THE NOTES AND METHODS OF TEACHING.

1. **Position of Teacher and Class.**—(1.) The teacher should cultivate the habit of sitting well up, and of not allowing the head to droop with the eyes fixed more upon the notes than upon the class. (2.) The scholars should also be well in front, so that the teacher may not need to turn much to the right or left to see any member of the class.
2. **The Order of Lesson.**—There are three or four steps in the arrangement of a Lesson which should be carefully borne in mind—(a) The Introduction, (b) The subject matter for Instruction, (c) Recapitulation, (d) The Application. By the *first* we arouse attention, by anecdote or illustration, or connect the subject with the context or preceding Lesson; by the *second* we add to the knowledge of the class; by the *third* we test the instruction by question and repetition; and by the *fourth* we seek to bring home the truth to the heart and conscience of the scholars.
3. **An Outline of Lesson arranged in accordance with the foregoing method.**

#### No. 18.—LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD.

##### FIRST STEP—The Introduction.

1. Picture vineyard in the East—fenced round, well planted—much work to be done.
2. This a picture of God's vineyard—the world. He has employed labourers therein from the *first*, and will do so to the *last*. This Lesson to show how the work should be done, and how the reward will be bestowed.

##### SECOND STEP—The Subject.

(Read St. Matt. 20. 1-15.)

1. Notice that the labourers are *called* to the work—that it is God who calls at different times, and that some, like the rich young ruler, may refuse the call. Others obey the call from childhood, even from baptism; while others, like the lost sheep, when life seems almost gone, may listen and hear His voice, and be able to labour but for *one hour*.
2. Notice the way in which the work should be done, *obediently, heartily, thankfully*.
3. Explain some of the terms used in the Parable.

4. Each labourer has, when the day's work is done, nominally the same reward; but there is a difference. Wherein is the difference? Not in the *penny*, but in the *heart* of the labourer.

##### THIRD STEP—Recapitulation.

This is a most important step and should never be neglected. Close Bibles, ask questions, go over the whole subject, and thus test the instruction to see if it has got a lodgment in the mind and understanding of the scholars.

##### FOURTH STEP—Application.

1. Think of any labourers in God's vineyard, in the Old and New Testament; also in school, at home, or at church.
2. What is it that is most pleasing to God? the *amount* of work, or the *motive* which prompts the worker?
3. What is the best test of a work for God? *Love*. With love in the heart there is no complaining.

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 19.

### Subject: TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ST. MATTHEW.</b>                                                     | <b>MODERN BETHANY</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>SUNDAY</b> ... ch. 21. 1-11                                          | <p>Let us go through the points which occur in the sacred history, of the last days of Christ, during which alone He appears for any continuous period in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood. From Bethany we must begin. A wild mountain-hamlet, screened by an intervening ridge from the view of the top of Olivet, is perched on a broken plateau of rock, the last collection of human habitations before the desert-hills which reach to Jericho. This is the modern village of El-Azariéh, which derives its name from its clustering round the traditional site of the one house and grave which gave it an undying interest.—<i>Stanley</i>.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>MONDAY</b> ... „ 12-22                                               | <b>THE ROAD TO JERUSALEM.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>TUESDAY</b> ... „ 23-32                                              | <p>The road descends a slight declivity, and the glimpse of the city is again withdrawn behind the intervening ridge of Olivet. A few moments, and the path mounts again; it climbs a rugged ascent, it reaches a ledge of smooth rock, and in an instant the whole city bursts into view. As now the dome of the Mosque El-Aksa rises like a ghost from the earth before the traveller stands on the ledge, so, then, must have risen the Temple-Courts; as now the grey town on its broken hills, so then the magnificent city, with its background—long since vanished away—of gardens and suburbs on the western plateau behind. Immediately below was the valley of the Kedron, here seen in its greatest depth as it joins the valley of Hinnom, and thus giving full effect to the great peculiarity of Jerusalem seen only on its eastern side—its situation as if a city rising out of a great abyss. It is hardly possible to doubt that this rise and turn of the road, this rocky ledge, was the exact point where the multitude paused again, and “He, when He beheld the city, wept over it.”—<i>Sinai and Palestine (Stanley)</i>.</p> |
| <b>WEDNESDAY</b> ... „ 33-46                                            | <b>VIEW FROM MOUNT OLIVET.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>THURSDAY</b> ...Ps. 148. 1-14                                        | <p>The road (from Bethany) slopes by a gradual ascent up the Mount of Olives, through green fields and under shady trees, till it suddenly sweeps round to the northward. It is at this angle of the road that Jerusalem, which hitherto has been hidden by the shoulder of the hill, bursts full upon view. There, through the clear atmosphere, rising out of the deep umbrageous valleys which surrounded it, the city of ten thousand memories stood clear before Him, and the morning sunlight, as it blazed on the marble pinnacles and gilded roofs of the Temple-buildings, was reflected in a very fiery splendour which forced the spectator to avert his glance.—<i>Life of Christ (Farrar)</i>.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>ZEPHANIAH.</b>                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>FRIDAY</b> ... ch. 3. 14-20                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>REVELATION.</b>                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>SATURDAY</b> ... ch. 1. 4-8                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

## Subject: THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

(ST. MATTHEW 21. 1-11.)

Learn—Psalm 24, ver. 8-10.

BRIEF  
SUMMARY.

- I.—Sketches.
- II.—Incidents.
- III.—Reflections.

**INTRODUCTION.**—Our Lord now returns to Jerusalem, and the occasion is one of great triumph. "The Son of David" enters the royal city; amid the loud hosannas of the multitude! The two preceding Lessons refer to an incident which occurred in the Peræan ministry, beyond the Jordan. Many important events had, however, taken place since our Lord's previous visit to Jerusalem. We now come to the last week of His ministry on earth. Each succeeding day and hour were marked with events of the most thrilling interest. Preceding the triumphal entry, we have in rapid succession—The Raising of Lazarus, the Visit of Zacchæus at Jericho, the Giving of Sight to Blind Bartimeus; and now, the last Sabbath evening He spends with His beloved friends at Bethany. "Simon the leper"—probably he that was cured of his disease (see St. Mark 1. 40; St. Matt. 8. 2; St. Luke 5. 12), early in our Lord's ministry—and Martha, supposed by some to have been Simon's wife, so busy was she in arranging the feast (St. John 12. 1-3), entertain our Lord and His disciples. Lazarus and Mary appear to have been invited guests. Mary, in adoring gratitude, anoints the feet of Jesus with ointment, very costly. Much people heard of His arrival at Bethany, and "came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom He had raised from the dead." On the morrow, probably the first day of the week (our Sunday), Jesus drew nigh . . . to Bethphage, and then are heard the first sounds of preparation for the triumphal entry (ver. 1).

### I. Sketches.

#### 1. In Jerusalem.

- (1.) We have already seen (*Lesson 17*) that the Jews had rejected our Lord—that they had stoned and driven Him from the Temple.
- (2.) The Passover is again at hand. People from all parts of the country are flocking to Jerusalem. Josephus, their historian, states that about three millions of people were gathered there at the Passover, and some 260,000 lambs were annually slain.
- (3.) Pilate, the governor, with his soldiery, were there. Herod also, from Galilee, had come to witness the annual festival.
- (4.) The excitement was great; on some occasions it had led to bloodshed. Pilate had built the tower of Antonia, overlooking the Temple, from whose walls the soldiers, always on the watch, could observe any signs of tumult. Then with drawn swords, on some occasions, they rushed upon the people, committing dreadful slaughter. To this Jesus alludes in St. Luke 19. 1.

- (5.) News had now spread of the return of our Lord to Bethany. The chief priests, excited by the miraculous raising of Lazarus from the dead, were planning His death (St. John 12. 10, 11), blindly thinking that thus they would prevent the people following after Jesus.
- (6.) But the people sought for Jesus in the Temple, spoke of Him, and inquired whether He would come? (St. John 11. 26.) Thus the policy of the priests defeated itself, for many went out to see Lazarus who was raised from the dead, and believed (St. John 11. 45).

#### 2. At Bethany.

- (1.) The quiet Sabbath rest is now over. (See *Introduction*.) The crowds of pilgrims, resting by the way, are now free to pursue their journey. The word passes among them that Jesus intends to enter the city in the course of the day.
- (2.) And lo! presently He leaves the quiet home at Bethany, surrounded by His disciples and friends, and makes for the little village of Bethphage, on His way towards the Holy City.

## No. 19.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### 3. On Mount Olivet.

- (1.) Another sketch we must take before passing on. (Refer to Mr. Stock's Notes "Life of our Lord" and there see plan of the Mount of Olives, with Jerusalem and the surrounding localities.)
- (2.) Observe the two roads from Bethany to Jerusalem—one to the north, over the top of the Mount; this was chiefly used by foot passengers. The other to the south, and not so steep as the former, round the shoulder of the Mount; and upon this road our Lord made His triumphal entry.
- (3.) The height of Mount Olivet is about 2,300 feet above the level of the sea. (Refer to "Road to Jerusalem.") And picture the beauty of the scene—Jerusalem, with its walls and towers and domes, and the Valley of Jehoshaphat intervening, and the view extending onward, far west, towards the great sea, and the distant hills of Samaria.
- (4.) But on this day, the first day of the week of preparation for the Passover, what do we see? Tents by thousands covering the mountain sides—Jerusalem too small for its vast assembly of visitors. Yes! But more still. See a great multitude coming up the steep Mount by the short way; and look on the other side towards Bethphage—another crowd advancing! The two companies meet; and this leads to the next part of the Lesson.

### II. Incidents.

Read St. Matt. 21. 1-7, and refer to St. Mark 11. 1-8, and St. Luke 19. 29-31.

#### 1. At Bethphage (ver. 1).

- (1.) An old prophet 500 years before had foretold how the king would enter the royal city (Zech. 9. 9).
- Bethany was but two miles from Jerusalem. Jesus had often walked the distance before. Why then this riding upon an ass?
- (a.) That the Jews might know He whom they had rejected and tried to stone was the true Messiah, the son of God, and that He would enter the royal city like the kings of old. (1 Kings 1. 32, 33).
- (b.) As the thousands of lambs, innocently resting on the hill-sides, were about to be offered as Passover sacrifices, He would for once draw special attention to Himself as the Lamb of God about to be slain for the sins of the whole world.
- (2.) Two disciples are sent to the exact spot where the animal was to be found (ver. 2, 3, 6, 7). "The Lord hath need of him"; this would satisfy the owner (St. Mark 11. 3, 4), and show to the disciples His perfect knowledge of all things. (Compare St. John 1. 48.)

#### 2. At Olivet. (See Farrar.)

- (1.) The two companies now united, and forming a great throng, sang the royal anthem—"Hail to the Son of David!"—that is, like our "God save

the Queen," a hymn of praise and prayer.

*Hosanna* means, "Save now, I beseech thee" (Ps. 118. 25).

- (2.) They spread their garments on the colt (see 2 Kings 9. 13), and in the way (ver. 8); others cut down branches of fig, and olive, and palm from the groves as they passed, and strewed them in the path, as emblems of *gladness and triumph*. (Compare Lev. 7. 9.)

Thousands of voices joined in the cry, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," as He advanced to the crest of the Mount, where travellers tell us Jerusalem, in all its splendour, burst suddenly into view. "Its situation, as of a city rising out of a deep abyss."—Stanley.

- (3.) The multitudes—"those going before and those that were following" (St. Mark 11. 9)—paused at this spot; and Jesus, when He beheld the city, wept over it" (St. Luke 19. 41). "A strange contrast—the King *weeping*, the people rejoicing!

### 3. In Jerusalem.

- (1.) The procession now continues its journey down the slope of Olivet, past the Garden of Gethsemane, entering Jerusalem by the gate now called St. Stephen's. Jesus dismounts near the Temple. He enters in, and there for the second time He drives out the money-changers from His Father's house.
- (2.) The children joined now in loud hosannas (ver. 16), which sadly displaced the chief priests. But this was another proof of the truth of their scriptures, of which our Lord reminds them (Ps. 8. 2).

### III.—Reflections.

1. The songs of praise from little children are well pleasing unto the Lord. They were *strength* to Him in trial and pending sorrow.
2. The smallest of God's creatures may minister to His wants. "The Lord hath need of him" are words of comfort in sorrow and bereavement. A little brother or sister is taken from this life to a brighter and happier life above—the thought that the Lord hath need of him or her gives comfort to father and mother and brothers and sisters.
3. Jesus wept over Jerusalem. Why so? So busy a city, full of people and gladness, in four days to celebrate with the utmost zeal the great feast. Yes; but He looks forward forty years, when for its *sins* speedy destruction would follow.
- "The day of their visitation" had come, and they knew it not.
4. Jesus from on high now looks down upon every city in this world, and into the heart of every man, woman, and child. What grieves Him most now? *Sin*, in the heart and life, unpent of.
- Disbelief*, like that of the Jews, who binely and wilfully rejected Him.
- Every sermon or lesson is a child's day of visitation. Let each ask—How am I using and valuing my Christian privileges?

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 20.

### Subject: THE MARRIAGE FEAST.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ST. MATTHEW.                                                            | <b>"PUT ON CHRIST."</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| SUNDAY ... ch. 22. 1-14                                                 | We may affirm of the wedding garment that it is righteousness in its largest sense, the whole adornment of the new and spiritual man, including the faith without which it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11. 6), and the holiness without which no man shall see Him (Heb. 12. 14); or, like this guest, only see Him to perish at His presence. Whether we contemplate this guest as a self-righteous person, trusting in a righteousness of his own, instead of a righteousness of Christ's, imputed and imparted, or see in him a more ordinary sinner, who with the Christian profession and privileges is yet walking after the flesh and not after the spirit—in either case the image holds good; he is rejecting something, even the true robe of the spirit, bestowed on him when he was made a member of Christ; and which, if he has since let go, he may yet, on the strength of that gift, freely at any moment reclaim; he is a despoiler, counting himself good enough merely as he is in himself in the flesh and not in the spirit (John 3. 6), to appear in the presence of God (Prov. 16. 2).— <i>Archbishop Trench.</i> |
| MONDAY ... " 15-22                                                      | <b>THE WEDDING GARMENT.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| TUESDAY ... " 28-38                                                     | We learn from the parable that every sinner must simply comply with God's terms in order that he may be saved; and elsewhere in Scripture we are fully taught what these terms are. An abundant answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" is recorded by the Spirit; the only point regarding it which this parable teaches, is that a sinner must abandon his own method, and fall in with Christ's. The meaning of the man who sat at the feast, without a wedding garment seems to have been, "I am my own master, and I shall work my own way to heaven;" the meaning of the man who meekly wore it was, "We are not our own; we are bought with a price: our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, but the Lord is our righteousness." Thus the parable concentrates itself at last upon a point: but that point is the turning point of life or death to men.— <i>Rev. W. Arnold.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| WEDNESDAY... " 34-46                                                    | <b>THE ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Isa. 61. 10).</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| ST. LUKE.                                                               | Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness<br>My beauty are, my glorious dress;<br>Midst flaming worlds, in these array'd,<br>With joy shall I lift up my head.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| THURSDAY ... ch. 14. 16-24                                              | Bold shall I stand in Thy great day,<br>For who ought to my charge shall lay?<br>Fully absolved through these I am,<br>From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PROVERBS.                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| FRIDAY ... ch. 9. 1-12                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| ISAIAH.                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| SATURDAY ... ch. 55. 1-7                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

Subject: THE MARRIAGE FEAST.

(ST. MATTHEW 22. 1-14.)

Learn—Romans, ch. 13. ver. 14.

BRIEF  
SUMMARY.

- I.—The Marriage Feast.  
II.—The King's Guests.  
III.—The Wedding Garment.

**INTRODUCTION.**—In previous Lesson a glance only could be taken at the ministrations of our Lord in the Temple, after His triumphal entry. When He had reduced its courts to decency and silence, and had begun His customary teaching, the children (probably the choir boys engaged in the Temple services) took up the song, which had sounded even to the Temple courts—"Hosanna to the Son of David." Then the chief priests angrily called His attention to the cry. "Hearest Thou what these say?" Greeks, who had come to Jerusalem to worship, eagerly desired, like the wise men, to see Jesus (St. John 12. 20-50), but the Jews, the favoured nation, despised and rejected Him. The blind and the lame and diseased sought Him (ch. 21. 14) and were healed. The poor heard Him gladly, and were very attentive (St. Luke 19. 48); but the learned and the privileged took counsel "how they might destroy Him." It was not safe, therefore, to remain in Jerusalem; so in the evening of the Sunday "He left them, and went out of the city," returning to Bethany, "and He lodged there" (ch. 21. 17).

Remarks.

1. On the Monday morning Jesus returns to the Temple. The fig-tree by the way (ch. 21. 18), with plenty of leaves but no fruit, failed to supply food to satisfy the Saviour's hunger.—As a type of hypocrisy, having an appearance of all that was good in a fig-tree—but no fruit, its condemnation and destruction were made the means of teaching the disciples the *peril of hypocrisy*; the *destruction* that will surely fall upon the *impenitent*; also the *power of faith* (chap. 21. 17-22).
2. When He enters the Temple and commences again to teach the people, the Chief Priests and Elders, very much excited by His triumphal entry into the city on the previous day and by His teaching among the people, came in a body to challenge Him, saying, "By what authority?" He did these things, Jesus, as on other occasions, refers them to the teaching of John Baptist, and asks them a question which they were afraid to answer. For if John's teaching were "from Heaven," then why not believe it, Jesus would have answered. John had pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1. 15, 29). They would not acknowledge this; and the fear of the people prevented them saying, "of men." So the Chief and learned Priests and Elders were obliged to reply, "We cannot tell" (ch. 21. 23-27), a very humiliating answer in the presence of the people.
3. The defeat of these learned Priests left our Saviour free to continue His instruction of the people, which He does by parables.

a. *The Parable of the Two Sons*—teaching that mere profession without obedience is hypocrisy; and that the greatest of sinners who believe will enter Heaven before the self-righteous Jews (ch. 21. 28-32).

b. *The Wicked Husbandman*—a type of their rebellious nation, which had insulted, and beaten, and wounded the prophets and messengers of God, and at last were about to slay His Son; and for which a terrible destruction would fall upon them (ch. 21. 33-46).

c. And lastly the *Parable of the Marriage of the King's Son*—which shows that a like punishment awaits those who reject His gracious invitation, and those who by pretence or evasion seemingly comply with the conditions of pardon and acceptance.

With this latter parable the teaching of the day ended.

Let us examine the Parable and some of the lessons which it is intended to teach (ch. 22. 1-14).

I. The Marriage Feast.

*Note.*—This, though similar, differs from the Parable delivered in the Chief Pharisees' house, during the Persian ministry (*Daily Portion*, St. Luke 14). The Jews were not so excited against our Lord then, as now, and the condemnation was not so severe.

## No. 20.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### 1. A Royal Marriage.

It is the King who makes the Feast. In the Parable of the Householder (ch. 21. 33) Jesus is revealed as the only Son, the beloved Son. Here He is the King's Son (Ps. 72. 1), the heavenly Bridegroom, born of the royal house of David.

### 2. The Feast prepared.

When our Lord appeared, in fulfilment of prophecy, as the Messiah, the *Feast* was then ready—*The Kingdom of Heaven* was at hand. And He came with healing in His wings (Mal. 4. 2), offering, graciously, pardon and peace to those who would accept the royal invitation (ver. 1-4).

## II. The King's Guests.

### 1. The Bride—The Church.

In eastern countries the *espousal* of the Bride preceded the *marriage*, as a distinct act, and was separated by a considerable space of time, corresponding to our Lord's first coming and the Marriage of the Lamb, in the last great day (Rev. 19. 7). This Parable illustrates our Lord choosing His Bride.

### 2. The Invitation.

(1.) Servants are sent forth to *call* them that were *bidden*. Thus Esther invites Haman (Esther 5. 8.) The prophets of old had *bidden* the Israelites to look for the coming of the Messiah (St. Luke 10. 24).

(2.) "*They would not come*" (ver. 3), just as at the call of John Baptist (St. Luke 3. 4-6), or when Apostles were first sent on their mission (Matt. 10).

(3.) "*They made light of it*" (ver. 5).

So after the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension, still no impression: "*they went their way*," for selfish enjoyments—one to his land or possessions, the other to his merchandise or to his search after wealth. (1 Tim. 6. 9, 17.) Woe to such (St. Luke 6. 25).

(4.) *Others violently rejected the invitation* (ver. 6).

"*They took*," prophetic, of the treatment in store for the Disciples (Acts 4. 3); "*entreated them spitefully*" (Acts 14. 5); and "*slew them*" (Acts 7. 58).

### 3. The King's Wrath.

He sent His armies to destroy the murderers and burn up their city—*Jerusalem*. Often had the nation been so punished, by the Assyrians, by Nebuchadnezzar; Jerusalem had been burned (2 Kings 25. 9), and it would be so again (by the Romans, A.D. 70) (Dan. 9. 25, and St. Matt. 24. 2). (See next Lesson.)

### 4. The King's Generosity.

The Jews reject Christ. The Gentiles are to be brought in—"Go into the highways;" Philip goes to Samaria (Acts 8. 5); Peter to Cornelius (10. 19); Paul to Athens (17. 18), inviting to repentance, and to partake of a free banquet on one condition.

What this condition is, the concluding part of the Parable shows.

## III. The Wedding Garment.

### 1. The Wedding ready.

Those who *reject* the invitation are not "*worthy*" (ver. 8). Other messengers—ministers, teachers, missionaries—are to be sent to all the ends of the earth (ver. 9, 10); and the wedding is to be furnished with guests.

### 2. The King's Visit.

(1.) In these days, at a royal banquet, the guests are all assembled and in readiness to meet the king or queen in the banqueting-hall. This custom is alluded to in the Parable.

(2.) In olden times, it was customary to provide a proper robe, so that each might be clothed in a suitable garment at the king's banquet.

In our days when any one dines at Court with the Queen, there is a Court costume which each guest must be provided with for the occasion.

### 3. A False Professor.

The King at once detects a visitor, who, not like the Jews in the preceding part of the Parable, had openly rejected the invitation, but one who *professes* to accept the Gospel message, and yet he had not put on the wedding garment. The garment was *provided*, as we have already seen, so that this guest was wilfully disloyal. "*Friend*"—kind words—(ver. 12), but he made no excuse: he was "*speechless*," and could not look the King in the face: he was *self-condemned*.—(See "*Archbishop Trench*.")

### 4. The King's Sentence.

"*Bind him*,"—no coming in again to the King's presence. "*Cast him into outer darkness*" (ver. 13). All was bright at the marriage feast: *outside* there is weeping, agony, and woe.

This was to be the punishment to the hypocrites and false professors.

The *rebellious* and those who make a mere *outward show* of religion are alike condemned by the King (ver. 7 and 13).

## • LESSONS.

1. Learn that the King *sees* what is in the heart of each one who enters His presence; and that it is a fearful sin to mock God by false religion, or to reject His offers of mercy.

2. We must *put on* the wedding garment. This is none other than Christ's righteousness.

(1.) By faith, in taking Jesus at His word, and believing in Him.

(2.) By walking before Him, in the light of His countenance, so that His light may shine in *our lives*, in *our words*, and *thoughts*, and *acts*.

(3.) Loving Him and serving Him will then become a *habit*, a *habit* of our lives; the *true robe* or *habit* of righteousness which Christ provides for all His children.

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 21.

### Subject: THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. |                   | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                         | St. MATTHEW.      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| SUNDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 23. 1-12  | <b>THE BLOOD OF ZACHARIAS.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| MONDAY                                                                  | ... " 18-33       | This Zacharias is probably Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, who was stoned in the Temple-court in the reign of Josiah (2 Chron. 24. 20-22). His being named by our Lord as the last of the martyrs may be accounted for by the fact that, in the ancient Jewish arrangement of the Old Testament the books of Chronicles came last, so that Abel and Zechariah would be the first and last examples in the Scriptures ( <i>Lightfoot</i> ). It is worth noting, too, that in each case there is a call for Divine vengeance; "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me" (Gen. 4. 10); "Let the Lord look upon it and require it" (2 Chron. 24. 22).                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| TUESDAY                                                                 | ... " 34-39       | Another reason was suggested to the writer by the late G. Warington, viz.: "The intrinsic character of the two murders. Abel's was the murder of a brother, utterly unoffending and hated only because of his righteousness, and his recognition of the way in which God's favour was to be obtained in contrast to his brother's passion and will-worship. Zechariah's was the murder of a prophet, hated for his faithfulness and plain-speaking. These two represented the leading features of that murder which the Jews were about to commit, and the complicated guilt which they would thus bring upon their heads". . . . their guilt in killing the Son of Man, the representative and federal head of His Church, was as great as that of all other murders of His people put together.— <i>Life of our Lord</i> (Eugene Stock). |
|                                                                         | St. LUKE.         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| WEDNESDAY                                                               | ... ch. 21. 5-24  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                         | 2 CHRONICLES.     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| THURSDAY                                                                | ... ch. 24. 15-22 | <b>REFLECTIONS.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                                                         | DEUTERONOMY.      | We see in this chapter the woes which fall upon the rebellious and the ungodly.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| FRIDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 28. 45-53 | The compassion of God—how He would have us turn unto Him and live.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                         | 1 KINGS.          | The justice of God—that those who willfully neglect His Word and despise His offers of mercy will justly be punished for their offences.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| SATURDAY                                                                | ... ch. 9. 1-9    | And as with nations, so will it be with individuals.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                         |                   | But is there no hope for the poor Jew? (see ver. 39.) A day will come when he will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                                         |                   | Pray for that day (Romans 11. 1, 2, and 23), for "God is able to graft them in again." He can give the Jew a right spirit (Zech. 12. 9, 10). Remember the fig-tree. ( <i>Introduction</i> .) By faith all things are possible to him that believeth.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

Subject: THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

(ST. MATTHEW 23.)

Learn—St. John, ch. 15. ver. 2.

BRIEF SUMMARY. { I.—Woes.  
II.—Compassion.  
III.—Destruction.

INTRODUCTION.—Reference in previous Lesson was made to our Lord's teaching in the Temple on the Monday in Holy Week. On the following morning He enters for the last time the sacred building. The disciples on their way to the Temple pass the solitary fig-tree, which on previous day was fresh and bright with beautiful foliage. It is now seen to be shrivelled and dying, which they notice with great astonishment (St. Matt. 21. 20, St. Mark 11. 20). Jesus at once assures them of the power of *faith*, in the full exercise of which they would be able to do greater things than this. In the Temple fresh conspiracies are being plotted against Him. Pharisees and Herodians (ch. 22. 15-22) unite, for this once, trying to find cause wherewith to accuse Jesus before Pilate. They question Him about tribute money. Taking up a Roman penny, which at His request they had brought to Him, and paraphrasing the language, He, as it were, said: "The coin belonged to the Romans; for its use the tax was therefore rightly due. The Jews belonged to God, they were especially His chosen people, render likewise to Him His due." This silenced the Pharisees and Herodians. The Sadducees then tried to convict our Lord of error, but were also silenced (ch. 22. 28-33). The "multitude were astonished." Probably there were not less than 6,000 people present, for the court of the Temple, which was always crowded at Passover time, would hold quite that number. Turning to this vast multitude, Jesus warned them to beware of these false guides, and He spoke for the last time in the Temple Court the words which form the subject of this Lesson.

I. Woes (ch. 23. 13-33).

*Note.*—The words "woe unto you" are used by our Lord, in speaking of the scribes and Pharisees, *eight* times; "hypocrites," *seven* times; "blind guides," and "fools" and "blind," each *twice*; "serpents and generation of vipers," *once*.

He would not have used language so severe, except for condemnation and solemn warning.

Contrast language used to those who came to Him in trouble: "*Daughter, thy faith hath saved thee.*" (*Lesson No. 9*). "*Son, be of good cheer*" (St. Matt. 9. 2).

1. The First Woe (ver. 13).

The scribes and Pharisees "shut up the kingdom of heaven." They rejected John Baptist—refused to acknowledge Christ—and by their cavilling and all they could to keep others from believing. High position, pretended learning and spiritual pride were a real hindrance to their acceptance of the Gospel, and they were jealous lest others should be persuaded to do so. This was a great sin.

2. The Second Woe (ver. 14).

They made money of their religious profession—imposed upon the weak. For a pretence and for payment they made long prayers. This was the sin of hypocrisy and greed.

3. The Third Woe (ver. 15).

They would spare no pains to get "numbers"—to get *one* proselyte to join their ranks. It was not God's glory they thought of, but the glory of their "sect," which filled them with zeal. This also was a sin.

4. The Fourth Woe (ver. 16).

They were so blind as to teach that an oath differed in importance according to the place where people took it. Our Lord refers them to "Heaven . . . the throne of God . . . and by Him that sitteth thereon"—the true sanctifier of an oath.

5. The Fifth Woe (ver. 23).

They were very particular about giving tithes, even upon so small a thing as "mint," a garden herb, but neglected far more weighty matters, such as love, justice, and honesty.

## No. 21.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### 6. The Sixth Woe (ver. 25).

Condemns mere outside cleanliness, when it was known they were given to all manners of excess.

### 7. The Seventh Woe (ver. 27).

Condemns pretence and show, when the heart was full of deadly sin and wickedness.

### 8. The Eighth Woe (ver. 28-33).

The veneration of dead saints, and the kind of mock repentance which condemned their own fathers for their treatment of these saints and prophets in bygone days, when they themselves were about to commit a more awful crime on Calvary. This was the final summing up of *Woe*, the penalty for which should come upon that generation. On them should fall the retribution for the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias.

LESSON.—Each *Woe* is in condemnation of evil, much of which exists now in every Christian Church.

*Beware of hypocrisy*—of mere profession, of false teachers, of blind leaders; and *learn* to be honest, real, and steadfast in the faith, and brave in confessing Christ, when we have learnt to know Him, and the preciousness of His Word.

Such are some of the lessons to be learnt from these solemn warnings.

## II.—Compassion (ver. 37).

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem." So much of woe had been pronounced against the enemies of Christ, it is not until we read verse 37 that we learn it was all spoken in *tenderness*, and *sorrow*, and *compassion*.

How is this shown?

### 1. By Teaching and Warning.

The Jews had enjoyed many privileges — "prophets, wise men, and scribes" (ver. 34)—had been sent with message after message, teaching and warning them to turn to the Lord. They had no excuse (Job 33.14).

The compassion of Jesus is similarly shown now to boys and girls and grown-up people. They have teachers and ministers too. Sickness often knocks at the door of the heart. Loss of friend, and many sorrows are the sounds of His voice, calling to them, "Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" (Eze. 33.11).

### 2. By Reminding the Jews that God sees every evil deed (ver. 35).

The blood of innocent Abel (Gen. 4. 8) and Zacharias (2 Chron. 24. 22) was not shed in vain.

The blood of the saints and martyrs, of John Baptist and the children of Bethlehem, cried for vengeance. Jesus, in *compassion*, warns the Jews of this, that there may be no excuse.

So in after ages—e.g., the terrible massacre of the Christians at Rome, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the Smithfield martyrdoms, have not been in vain. God looks upon the blood—it is not forgotten by Him; and the

day of reckoning will come upon nations and individuals. (Refer to Note, page 66.)

### 3. By Earnest Appeal.

"O Jerusalem! . . . How often would I have gathered thy children . . . and ye would not."

Thus warning the people that they would be lost by their own fault—*solely by their own free will!*

So now, if we set up our will against God, we shall be amongst the lost (St. John 5. 40). It is most sinful to resist the *teaching* and the *warning* of God in His Word and in His Providence. (Compare Acts 7. 51 and Hosea 13. 9.)

See the consequences to the Jewish people.

## III.—Destruction (ver. 38, 39).

Note.—Our Lord had perfect knowledge of all that should come to pass; hence He proclaims (a) that the house in which He was speaking, the glorious Temple at Jerusalem, should become desolate, and (b) that the day would come in which the children's cry and the shout of the multitude (ch. 21. 9) would again be heard—"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Ps. 118. 26). The latter prophecy deals with in next Lesson. We therefore refer in this to verse 38 only—Jerusalem desolate and destroyed.

### 1. Jerusalem Desolate.

(1.) Read the account of Moses of what should come to pass, if the people did not fear the Lord, and *observe* and *keep* the laws written in the Pentateuch (Deut. 28. 47-57, and ver. 58).

(2.) Our Lord, in pronouncing *Woe* upon the Jews, shows that they have fallen under this terrible condemnation.

### 2. Jerusalem Destroyed.

(1.) In the year A.D. 66 the Jews were driven to open rebellion against the Romans, owing to the cruelty of their governors. Treachery, violence, and bloodshed, Josephus tells us, prevailed in Jerusalem.

(2.) The Romans sent an army against the place, but were beaten. They, however, pillaged the whole country for three years, causing dreadful havoc.

(3.) In A.D. 70 the Roman general, Titus, began the great siege. It was the time of the Passover. Immense multitudes were in Jerusalem. The town was surrounded, the walls broken down. The siege lasted six months. There was famine and pestilence, and great slaughter. After heroic resistance, Jerusalem was at length taken—(about 1,100,000 men were slain, and 97,000 carried away captive)—the Temple was destroyed by fire, and the place made a ruin. The old people, and the sick and the wounded, were killed; the young were sold as slaves. The Jews ever since have been scattered over the face of the earth, and their country has been held in succession by Romans, Persians, Saracens, and Turks. (See "*Reflections*.")

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 22.

### Subject: THE SECOND COMING.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars.       | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p style="text-align: right;">St. MATTHEW.</p> <p>SUNDAY ... ch. 24. 1-14</p> | <p><b>MARTYRDOM OF CHRISTIANS AT ROME.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <p>MONDAY ... " 15-35</p>                                                     | <p>Nero proceeded with his usual artifice. He found a set of profligate and abandoned wretches, who were induced to confess themselves guilty, and on the evidence of such men a number of Christians were convicted—they were put to death with exquisite cruelty, and to their sufferings Nero added mockery and derision. Some were covered with the skins of wild beasts, and left to be devoured by dogs; others were nailed to the cross; numbers were burned alive; and many, covered with an inflammable matter, werelighted up, when the day declined, to serve as torches during the night. For the convenience of seeing this tragic spectacle, the emperor lent his own gardens. He added the sports of the circus, and assisted in person sometimes driving a chariot, and occasionally mixing with the rabble in the dress of a charioteer.—<i>Tacitus.</i></p> |
| <p style="text-align: right;">ACTS.</p> <p>WEDNESDAY ... ch. 1. 1-11</p>      | <p><b>ALL SAINTS' DAY.</b></p> <p>On champions blest, in Jesus' name,<br/>Short be your strife, your triumph full,<br/>Till every heart have caught your flame,<br/>And, lighten'd of the world's misrule,<br/>Ye soar those elder saints to meet,<br/>Gather'd long since at Jesus' feet,<br/>No world of passions to destroy,<br/>Your prayers and struggles o'er, your task all<br/>praise and joy. <span style="float: right;">(Keble.)</span></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p style="text-align: right;">ROMANS.</p> <p>THURSDAY ... ch. 13. 8-14</p>    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p>FRIDAY ... " 15. 4-13</p>                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p style="text-align: right;">CORINTHIANS.</p> <p>SATURDAY ... ch. 4. 1-5</p> | <p><b>LESSONS.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the Lord appears "one shall be taken and the other left." Twice does our Lord speak these words (ver. 40 and 41). There will be no time for repentance then—all shall appear before Him <i>as they are.</i><br/>Pray earnestly—pray always, that we may have faith in Christ; that we may serve Christ; that we may love Him and follow Him. So being, we shall be ready, when He appeareth, to meet Him without fear.</li> <li>Remember. In the days of Noah there was an ark of safety—but it only sheltered those who entered in.<br/>When the Son of Man cometh there shall be a rock of shelter; but only to those who are in Christ Jesus will there be shelter from the storm, in that day when He appeareth.</li> </ol>                                                                            |

Subject: THE SECOND COMING.

(ST. MATTHEW 24.)

Learn—St. Mark, ch. 13. ver. 35-37.

BRIEF  
SUMMARY.

- I.—Preparedness.  
II.—Watchfulness.  
III.—Faithfulness.

**INTRODUCTION.**—After uttering the solemn words concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, referred to in preceding Lesson, Jesus "went out from the Temple" (ver. 1), and while "going on His way" (Rev. Version) the disciples, either from national pride as Jews, proud of their position as a nation, or in the hope that the splendour and loveliness of the scene would touch His heart, pointed to the magnificent "buildings of the Temple"—the goodly stones (St. Luke 21. 5), the gates overlaid with gold and silver, the marble blocks (some 40 cubits long and 10 cubits high), the golden grapes and golden doors, the terraces and courts and rich mosaics, the flights of steps rising higher and higher from court to court, leading at last to the Holy of Holies; this building, not yet completed, although the workmen had been busy upon it for 50 years, filled the disciples with wonder and admiration. Surely our Lord cannot refer to the destruction of a temple so beautiful, when He cried, "Your house is left unto you desolate" (ch. 23. 38); but His answer leaves no doubt—"Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (ver. 2). And so they turned away from the city that knew not the day of its visitation, and sadly and silently they crossed the brook Cedron and sat on the Mount of Olives (ver. 3). It was within three days of our Lord's crucifixion. Gethsemane lay at His feet. Jerusalem, that had killed the prophets, and was now about to kill the Lord of Life and Glory, was just opposite. Knowing all things that should come to pass, He proceeds, in reply to the inquiry of Peter, James, and John, and Andrew, "when shall these things be?" to tell them of the signs of *His Coming again*, and of the end of the world. See also St. Mark 13. 8-37, and St. Luke 21. 7-38.

**Repetition.**

(Examine on previous Lesson.)

John and his three companions came *privately* (St. Mark 13. 3), saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be?"—(1) the destruction of Jerusalem; (2) the coming in triumph of Christ; (3) the end of the world.

We can easily imagine how great their anxiety must have been to know more about these things.

Think of London. Were its destruction foretold, how eager we should be to know all about the time and circumstances! Just so with the disciples. "See ye not all these things?" (ver. 11). *Take notice* (our Lord, as it were, says), for as surely as ye see these stones and pillars and golden gates, so will the words of *destruction* and of *prophecy* be fulfilled.

We have seen how true with respect to Jerusalem the words were. Now let us examine the further prophecy regarding **HIS SECOND COMING.**

**I.—Preparedness.**

**1. False Teachers** (ver. 4, 5, 11).

The disciples were to take heed and not be deceived by them. Many now profess to teach in Christ's name, but hold not His truth. Beware of them. We must be *prepared* for such evil workers. They are among the signs of His coming (ver. 25-27. 2 Pet. 2, 4, and Isa. 58. 1).

**2. Times of Trouble** (ver. 6-8).

(1.) *National.*

*Wars*,—such as when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem.

*Rebellion*,—such as in 1947-8, when the whole Continent of Europe was under revolt.

*Pestilence*,—such as when the cholera visited nearly every land. Troubles such as these are to precede the second coming, and are signs of warning to *prepare* the way among His people.

## No. 22.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

Those who are looking for His coming take heed to these things.

### (2.) Personal (ver. 9, 10).

The disciples were warned to *prepare* for heavy personal troubles—martyrdom, imprisonment, hatred—to be sadly fulfilled, *e.g.*, Stephen, *stoned*; James, *beheaded*; Peter, *crucified*; Paul, *beheaded*, &c. Christians at Rome, *burnt* by order of the cruel Nero. (See "Tactics.")

And this cruelty still continues in Africa and elsewhere, and will continue till He appeareth.

### 3. The Gospel as a Witness (ver. 14).

The Gospel to be preached everywhere, *as a witness*. It does not say that all shall receive it, but that all nations shall have it preached in their hearing. (See Lesson No. 10. Compare Acts 13, 14; Habak. 2, 14.) Hence the reason why those who love Jesus seek to *prepare* for His second coming by sending Bibles and missionaries to the heathen, and so help to hasten the coming of the Lord (2 Pet. 3, 11, 18; Heb. 10, 35).

### 4. The Triumphal Appearing.

#### a. The Circumstances.

1. A sign in the heavens (ver. 30). The sign of His first advent was a *star*. At His second advent there will also be a sign.
2. The Son of Man (ver. 30). Christ will come in human form—all shall see Him. It is His humanity that will be glorified before men.
3. The tribes of the earth shall mourn (ver. 30). The troubles mentioned in ver. 29 shall extend to every land. All nations shall be under the influence of terror.
4. Gather together His elect (ver. 31). The angels will collect the *living* and the *dead* to assemble around Him when He appeareth. (Compare 1 Thess. 4, 16 and 17; 1 Cor. 15, 51, 52.)

#### b. The Time of His Coming.

1. As surely as the branch of the fig-tree, when it putteth forth leaves, tells that summer is nigh (ver. 32); so *immediately* (ver. 29) after the signs, *i.e.*, "when ye shall see all these things" (ver. 33), we may know that the coming of Christ is near at hand.
2. This *generation*, *i.e.*, the human race (ver. 34), shall see the fulfilment of these things. Heaven and earth shall pass away (ver. 35), but the words of Christ are true, and can never fail.
3. *That day and hour* (ver. 36) unknown to any created being—even the angels know it not (see Acts 1, 7).

## II.—Watchfulness (ver. 37-44).

Notice the loving care of Jesus. Although He knew that the cruel death was about to fall on Him (see Introduction), He thinks not of Himself, but of those whom He came to save, and He, like the Gentle Shepherd (St. John 10, 11), who careth for His sheep, warns them of trouble and danger, and tells them and us:—

### 1. To Watch (ver. 42). Why?

- (1.) For we know not the hour when He shall come.
- (2.) In order that we may not share the fate of the godless who lived before the Flood.  
Be always on the watch, like the faithful sentry on his lonely walk. He is *trained* to watch—it is his *duty* to watch; and he *fails* not to keep watch.

### 2. To Pray—always (St. Luke 21, 36).

- (1.) That we may be kept from falling into worldly indulgence (ver. 38).
- (2.) That we may have strength given us to fulfil our duty towards God and towards man.
- (3.) That we may have faith to look for, and to hasten by our prayers the coming of the Lord of Glory (Rev. 22, 30).

## III.—Faithfulness (ver. 45, 47).

In the Church there are *now*, and will be when the Lord comes, some who are faithful and wise ("attentive"); others there are who merely make a profession of religion.

The *unfaithful* are doomed to fearful punishment (ver. 48-51)—those who profess to follow Christ, and yet say, in their heart (not outwardly, but with inward hypocrisy), He delayeth His coming, shall be cast asunder—literally *cut in pieces*. Remember, it is not the outwardly wicked who are thus spoken of, but the professing servants of Christ, who are found *unfaithful* at last.

Now contrast the condition and reward of the *faithful*.

### 1. The Condition (ver. 45).

- (1.) *Activity*. Each has something to do for the Lord—there are no idlers in His vineyard. It is the duty of the ruler in the Lord's house to give the children bread. Ministers especially have to teach their flocks, in due season, the way of life. But teachers, parents, brothers, sisters, all have duties to do in the Lord's household—His Church.
- (2.) *Reality*. The work must be thorough and real—not a *sham*. Whatever our work for the Lord may be, we must be conscientious, and do it faithfully. Those only are blessed whom the Lord "shall find so doing," *i.e.*, just doing the little thing we have to do *thoroughly* and *well*.

### 2. The Reward (ver. 46).

- (1.) *Blessed*. What is this? Just to be invited into the presence of the Lord. "Come, ye blessed of My Father" (ch. 25, 34), will be the most joyous words which His servants will hear when "The Son of Man shall come in His glory" (ver. 30).  
And yet there is a higher reward in store for the faithful.
- (2.) "Ruler over all his goods" (ver. 47). Hitherto he had to act in small matters; now he will "inherit the kingdom" (ch. 25, 34). Heaven is open, and its joys and privileges are bestowed upon the faithful in the earth.

(For "Lessons," see page 69.)

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 23.

### Subject: THE TEN VIRGINS.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. |                   | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                         | ST. MATTHEW.      | <b>IMPORTANCE OF PREPARATION.</b><br>You may have read in history of that hero, who, when an overwhelming force was in full pursuit, and all his followers were urging him to more rapid flight, coolly dismounted to repair a flaw in his horse's harness. While basted with the broken buckle the distant cloud swept down in nearer thunder; but just as the prancing hoofs and eager spears were ready to dash upon him, and like a swooping falcon, he had vanished from their view. The broken buckle would have left him on the field a dismounted and inglorious prisoner—the timely delay sent him in safety back to his comrades. There is in daily life the same luckless precipitancy, and the same profitable delay. The man who, from his prayerless awakening, bounces into the business of the day, however good his talents and great his diligence, is only galloping upon a steel harness with a broken buckle, and must not marvel if, in his hottest haste or most hazardous leap, he be left ingloriously in the dust; and, though it may occasion some delay beforehand, his neighbour is wiser who sets out all in order before the march begins.— <i>Rev. John Newton.</i> |
| SUNDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 25. 1-18  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| MONDAY                                                                  | ... „ 14-30       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| TUESDAY                                                                 | ... „ 31-46       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| WEDNESDAY                                                               | ... Ps. 45. 10-17 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                         | ST. JOHN.         | <b>APPLICATION.</b><br>1. <i>One thing needful. What is it? (ver. 4.)</i><br>And we must not be content with a little.<br><i>Remember:</i><br>(1.) It must be sought for now, and not put off till the last (ver. 8-12).<br>(2.) It can be most easily sought for and procured when young (Prov. 8. 17).<br>(3.) There is one way of getting it, and none other—we must ask for it (St. Luke 11. 13).<br>(4.) And lastly, to be sure that this <i>one thing</i> is genuine and true, we must put it to the test now, so as to be sure it will bear the test by-and-by (St. Matt. 5. 16).<br>Now, again ask—“What is the one thing needful?”<br><i>It is God's Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts.</i><br>He alone can make us to shine—it is He who anoints us with oil (2 Cor. 1. 21, 22), and can make us to endure unto the end.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| THURSDAY                                                                | ... ch. 2. 1-11   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                         | 1 THESSALONIANS.  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| FRIDAY                                                                  | ... ch. 4. 13-18  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| SATURDAY                                                                | ... ch. 19. 4-10  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                         | REVELATION.       | <b>2. Examples of Encouragement and of Warning.</b><br><div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <b>WISE.</b><br/> <i>Mary</i> (St. Luke 10. 42).<br/> <i>Disciples</i> (St. Matt. 19. 27).<br/> <i>Moses</i> (Heb. 11. 25).         </div> <div> <b>FOOLISH.</b><br/> <i>Young Ruler</i> (St. Luke 18. 18).<br/> <i>Judas</i> (St. Matt. 26. 47-49).<br/> <i>Balaam</i> (2 Pet. 2. 15).         </div> </div> <p>“Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he,<br/>         The wise in heart shall be called prudent”<br/>         (Prov. 16. 20, 21).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

## Subject: THE TEN VIRGINS.

(ST. MATTHEW 25. 1-13.)

Learn—St. Matthew, ch. 24. ver. 44.

BRIEF  
SUMMARY.

- I.—The Parable.
- II.—The Meaning.
- III.—The Application.

**INTRODUCTION.**—The discourse on the mountain side had not yet ended. Words of woe and of destruction do not sum up the Gospel of Christ. Lessons of watchfulness and faithfulness do not represent the whole teaching which Jesus now sets before His disciples. Truly He would come again in great triumph! But "neither the *day* nor the *hour*" was to be revealed. A life of service lay before the disciples; it was to be no half-hearted drowsy service which they would be called on to render. Talents would be committed to them (ver. 14-30), and these were to be used and not to lie dormant—like the one talent wrapped in a napkin. Talents of time and of opportunity, of grace and of mercy, of wealth and even of poverty, of spiritual teaching and of earthly learning, distributed as the Lord willeth—to some *five*, to some *two*, and to another *one*—all must be *used* in the Lord's vineyard: *none* to lie idle! How to be useful unto the end; how to pray and not to faint; how to watch for the Lord, and to be ready at His appearing; how to make timely provision for our spiritual wants; these are illustrated in the Parable of the Ten Virgins. *Life in the Lord* is the keynote of this parable.

### I.—The Parable.

#### The Circumstances.

Parable spoken on Mount of Olives two days before the Crucifixion. Re-call incidents of previous Lesson. These were among the last words of our Lord's public teaching on earth. The last words of a dying friend are very solemn; how much more so when spoken by our Lord!

#### 1. The Bridegroom (ver. 1).

According to Jewish custom, the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, "the children of the bride-chamber" (St. Matt. 9. 15. Compare St. John 3. 29), went to the house of the bride, and took her with great ceremony to his own house or home. The bride had also companions (Ps. 45. 14, 16), who went with her on the way.

#### 2. The Virgins (ver. 1-9).

Ten in number. This was not an accident. number, but formed a "company" (see Ruth 4. 2).

##### a. Their duties.

1. *They took their lamps* (ver. 1), marriages in the East being then celebrated, as they are now, at night.
2. *They went forth to meet the bridegroom* "and the bride" (ver. 1). (The latter words are found in some early versions.)

##### b. How performed.

1. All are careful as to outward observance. They take oil in their lamps.
2. They are subject to the same natural conditions which belong to human life—while waiting for the procession, all *fall asleep*.
3. The distinction (ver. 2-12).

##### Five Wise.

Took oil in their vessels, with their lamps (ver. 4).

Sleep comes upon them, the lamp gets dim; but when the cry is heard (ver. 6), they soon replenish the oil, and are ready to join the bridegroom and his bride. But have no oil to spare (ver. 9).

##### Five Foolish.

Took their lamps, but had no reserve of oil (ver. 8).

Waiting is weary work; something, they think, delays the bridegroom's coming. But when the cry goes forth, they ask of their companions for oil: for their lamps were "going out" (ver. 8).

#### 3. The Marriage (ver. 6).

(1.) "At midnight there was a cry." The sleepers are startled. The multitude are shouting as the bridal procession passes along. It is impossible to sleep now, so the virgins awake! "Go ye out to meet him" (ver. 6). They hear the cry. To the wise it brings *joy*—to the foolish *confusion*.

## No. 23.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

(2) *The procession advances.* Those that are ready enter with the bridegroom into the marriage feast.

(3) *The door is shut* (ver. 10). The foolish ask their companions for oil: then go to buy, and then in haste return. They knock and cry, "Lord, Lord!" but it is too late! The day of opportunity is gone. "Verily I say unto you (foolish virgins), I know you not" (ver. 12). "Too late!" is the answer from within, and they are shut out!

### II.—The Meaning.

*Circumstances to be remembered.* This Parable of our Lord had special reference to His promised coming again ch. 24, 30. Dan. 7, 13, 14). He had already warned them (ver. 27)—

- (1.) Of His sudden appearing.
- (2.) That the world would be going on without concern, very much engaged as in preceding centuries of its history (ver. 37, 39).
- (3.) But that it would be a terrible time of separation, and that no ties on earth could spare the indifferent at His coming. Love for His disciples and for His Church leads Him to speak this Parable, so that they might not, in that day, be taken unawares.

#### 1. Who is the Bridegroom?

The Son of Man (see ver. 13)—Christ Jesus our Lord. John Baptist teaches that our Lord came to earth for His bride—the Church, i.e., His faithful followers (St. John 3, 28-30). And St. Paul shows that his special work was to seek out those who should be presented unto Christ (2 Cor. 11, 2).

Such is the work of every minister, teacher, or parent, who seeks to train the lambs of Christ's flock.

#### 2. Who are the Virgins?

(1.) The great company of professing Christians, i.e., every baptized follower of Jesus, who cares enough about Him as to live in outward observance of the Gospel privileges.

The Parable does not refer to the really bad and wicked people who care nothing about Christ. These do not take the trouble to hear the Gospel story of His love and of His coming again.

(2.) The virgins in some things are all alike.

a. They confess to the same *faith* and *hope* that the bridegroom will come. They attend to the like duties and outward service, each carrying the lamp of office, and obeying eagerly the first call to go forth.

How like this is to the first religious impressions at Confirmation, or at first Holy Communion, or when first we learn to value prayer!

b. They all *slumbered and slept*. This equally applied to the wise and the foolish. Sleep is not wrong; it is necessary to the body, as much as taking food and exercise and engaging in rightful pursuits. The Lord may come when we are engaged in either the one or the other; but it is not for this that there will be condemnation.

(3.) Wherein then is the difference?

*The Wise. The Foolish.*

The minister may die in the pulpit (such has often been the case), the merchant at his counting-house, the soldier on the battle-field, the sailor in the storm, the miner by an explosion; each may be engaged at the post of duty when the call comes, or may be slumbering and off-guard—but those only are *wise* who have not put off to get oil, but were preparation till the last.

Until the hour of trial come they put off self-examination. Then they were in a great flutter and excitement. The foolish were like many in all ages, content to be outwardly religious, but had no deep trust in God—they had not laid up treasures in heaven. At midnight they went in their own strength to get oil, but were not told that they got it.

(4.) What is the *Oil*?

St. John describes it as the *unction* from the Holy One (1 John 2, 20, 27, 28)—God's Holy Spirit dwelling in the heart of man. *The Wise*, "quench not the Spirit" (1 Thess. 5, 19).

#### 3. When shall the Bridegroom come?

(1.) "The Lord from heaven shall descend with a shout" (1 Thess. 4, 16). The voice of the Archangel shall sound the alarm.

(2.) "At midnight" (ver. 6), "like a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 5, 2), will He come. "Watch, therefore" (ver. 13). The Jews used to think that their Messiah would come suddenly, at midnight, like as at the departure from Egypt, from bondage to liberty (Ex. 12, 29). So will the appearing of our Lord be—at a time the most unexpected, and it may be, when we are most inclined to slumber, and least expect Him.

(3.) He comes *now*.

a. When souls are taken from this life—that is "the coming of the Lord to them"; and

b. At times of revival in His Church—e.g., the Day of Pentecost, when by His Spirit He came with power to His Church.

#### 4. What shall the Separation be?

(1.) The trimming of the lamps only shows how self-deceived some remain to the last. They have not tested their faith, but put off doing so till "a more convenient season." And then the light of eternity reveals their emptiness, and each sees himself as he really is in God's sight.

(2.) Our Lord tells what the separation shall be (ver. 31-46), when the sheep shall be divided from the goats.

None shall escape in that day. Before Him shall be gathered all nations (ver. 32). Every child born into the world will hear the cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!"

Those who are *wise, now*, and not when it is too late—those who have learnt to serve and honour Him in this life—shall enter in; but the *foolish*, the unready, whose religion has been a mere "form of godliness," will be shut out from His presence, and upon them will the door be shut (Prov. 1, 28).

(III.—Application, see page 74.)

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 24.

### Subject: THE LAST SUPPER.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>ST. MATTHEW.<br/>SUNDAY ... ch. 26. 1-13</p>                         | <p><b>CEREMONIES OF THE PASSOVER.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p>MONDAY ... " 14-25</p>                                               | <p>The ceremonies of the Paschal Supper were, when fully carried out, very elaborate. The general order can be best understood by grouping them around the <i>four cups of wine</i>. The party being assembled, the head of the family gave thanks, using the words, "Praise be to Thee, O Lord our God, the King of the world, Who hast created the fruit of the vine"; after which the <i>first cup</i> was passed round. A general washing of hands followed, the "bitter herbs" (Ex. 12. 8) were eaten, and explanations given in reply to a question by one of the younger members. The first part of the "Hallel," or song of praise, comprising Ps. 113 and 114, was then sung. Then came the <i>second cup</i> of wine, after which the householder dipped a piece of bread with some herbs in the <i>charoseth</i> and ate it, saying, "This is the bread of affliction, which our fathers ate in Egypt." The meal was then proceeded with and finished, being concluded with the <i>third cup</i>, called the "cup of blessing." The singing of the rest of the Hallel, viz., Ps. 115-118, followed, and the <i>fourth cup</i> concluded the feast.—<i>Life of Our Lord (Eugene Stock).</i></p> |
| <p>TUESDAY ... " 26-35</p>                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <p>WEDNESDAY ... " 56-66</p>                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                         | <p><b>THE EUCHARIST.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <p>THURSDAY ... " 47-56</p>                                             | <p>"Took bread, and blessed it, and brake it." Luke has "gave thanks" instead of "blessed," but the meaning is nearly the same. From the Greek word which means "giving of thanks" is derived our "Eucharist." The blessing, "changed the bread, not in substance, not in quantity, not in quality; but in use, in purpose, in sanctity."—<i>Dr. Harold Browne, Expo. Art.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p>FRIDAY ... " 57-75</p>                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                         | <p><b>TRANSUBSTANTIATION.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <p>REVELATION.<br/>SATURDAY ... ch. 5. 1-14</p>                         | <p>The Romish doctrine of transubstantiation, which teaches that by consecration there is a conversion of the whole substance of the bread and wine into the substance of Christ's body and blood, is strongly opposed to the fact that when our Lord said the words "This is My Body," He was present in His natural body before the eyes of the Apostles. If it be said that Christ's body is now a spiritual body, and that therefore what could not be then can be now, this is to deny that the Apostles at that time partook of the real Sacrament.—<i>Dr. Walsham How.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

Subject: **THE LAST SUPPER.**

(ST. MATTHEW 26. 26-35.)

Learn—1 Corinthians, ch. 11. ver. 25.

BRIEF SUMMARY. { I.—The Preparation.  
II.—The Institution.  
III.—The Participation.

INTRODUCTION.—“Ye know that after two days the Passover cometh, and the Son of Man is delivered up to be crucified” (ver. 2, Rev. Version). Our Lord spake these words on the Tuesday evening of Passion Week; the Wednesday and Thursday, until the evening, were spent at Bethany. Judas in the meantime had “covenanted” (ver. 15) with the chief priests to betray our Lord for thirty pieces of silver. The high priests—Annas and Caiaphas—the elders, and scribes had held an assembly, and “consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill Him” (ver. 3, 4). They found a willing agent in the traitor, Judas.

St. Paul (who was expressly taught by our Lord) says to the Corinthians, “I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread” . . . . . (1 Cor. 11, 23). There is an admitted difficulty in assigning the institution of “The Lord’s Supper” to a definite stage in the various Paschal observances held by the Jews, but without entering into minutiae on this particular point, it may be observed, that the Evangelists and St. Paul unite on the main fact, viz., that on the night of our Lord’s betrayal “The Lord’s Supper” was instituted, and the commandment was given, “This do in remembrance of Me.” And the Church, ever since that memorable evening, has never ceased to observe her Lord’s command.

I.—Preparation.

1. The Time.

- (1.) On Wednesday and Thursday we find our Lord is resting in quiet with His disciples at Bethany. (*See Introduction.*)
- (2.) The evening of Thursday, being the commencement of 14th Nisan (Ex. 12. 6), preparation for keeping the Passover is being made in every house in Jerusalem and neighbourhood.
- (3.) The people from all parts of the country (*see Lesson No. 19*) are now assembled at the Holy City, and probably 200,000 lambs are about to be offered in sacrifice,\* in solemn remembrance of the night in which the angel, *passing over* the houses of the Israelites, upon which the blood of a slain lamb was sprinkled, and *slew* the first-born in every house of the Egyptians where there was no blood on the door-posts (Ex. 12. 13, 23).
- (4.) Every house in Jerusalem was swept, and every portion of leaven destroyed, in remembrance of the sudden departure from the house of bondage (Ex. 12. 30), and their escape from the hands of the Egyptians.

2. The Place.

- (1.) During the Thursday the disciples asked, “Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Passover?” (ver. 17.) Some of the people kept it at Bethany—it was lawful according to the Jewish rabbinical law to do so. Perhaps the disciples may have thought that the quiet of Bethany, away from the angry priests and elders, was safer, and would be chosen. Or it may be that he purposely concealed the place from them until His hour was come (St. John 13. 1). For one amongst them had turned traitor, and was plotting to betray Him (ver. 14-16).
- (2.) “Go ye into the city to such a man” (ver. 18). St. Mark says that *two* disciples were chosen for this duty (ch. 14. 13); and in St. Luke (ch. 22. 8) we see that Peter and John were the chosen disciples (not Judas) for this duty of making ready for the Passover. Judas had the bag (St. John 13. 29); and there was the provision for the feast to be made—a lamb, bitter herbs, unleavened cake, wine, to be purchased—but he is not to be trusted now. Our Lord, who knew all things, kept him in ignorance of the place where He would eat the Passover till the evening (ver. 27).

\* “Life of Christ,” vol. II., p. 277 (Farrar).

## No. 24.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### 3. The Upper Room (St. Mark 14, 15).

It is in the house of a friend that our Lord chooses to keep the Passover. This is shown in the words, "The Master saith, My time is at hand."

It was, therefore, in the house of some disciple—one who knew and acknowledged Jesus as *Master*. Some have thought that the house belonged to Joseph of Arimathea, or to John Mark, and that the room was the same as mentioned in Acts 1, 13, where the disciples waited in prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2, 1).

### 4. Other Circumstances.

(1.) The Jewish Passover was kept with great ceremony. (See Ex. 12, 25-27.) The whole household, including the *children*, were to be present at its observance. (See "The Ceremonies.")

(2.) Our Lord, like the Father of the household, gathered His disciples together, loving them, "He loved them unto the end" (St. John 13, 1). And He proceeded to illustrate in His own person, what they had been taught from childhood, by figure and type; and yet they knew but little of the application or meaning of the ceremony as applied to Christ Himself.

## II.—The Institution.

(Read ver. 26-30, and compare St. Mark 14, 22-25, St. Luke 22, 19, 30, and 1 Cor. 11, 23-28.)

### 1. At the Feast.

(1.) We may picture the scene. Probably three tables placed, like a class in school, forming three sides of a square. Jesus and His disciples reclining on couches around the table. There may have been no servants present; but our Lord took upon Himself the form of a servant (Phil. 2, 7), laid aside His garments (St. John 13, 4), and washed the disciples' feet.

Wondrous humility!—showing how He laid aside His Glory (2 Cor. 8, 9) that we might be cleansed from all our sins (1 Cor. 6, 11, and Rev. 1, 5).

(2.) One more opportunity is given for repentance. "As they did eat" (ver. 21) they were told that *one* of them should betray their Lord! Every one began to ask, "Is it I?" (ver. 22.) The sorrow that was hanging over the company (ver. 2) now deepened. Judas also asks, "Is it I?" but sin and Satan had blinded him, and "outer darkness" (ch. 25, 30) filled his heart. "Sin when it hath conceived bringeth forth death."

### 2. The Memorial Blessing.

At the Paschal Feast the cup of blessing was always passed round. Our Lord now selects those parts of the ceremony, which by His own command were to be of perpetual obligation, and sanctifies them.

(1.) The *bread* and the *wine* are thus chosen by our Lord (ver. 26, 27).

(2.) He, "the Lamb of God" (St. John 1, 29), was to be given up and slain on the morrow for the sins of the world.

(3.) He offers Himself as the *one sacrifice, once offered* (Heb. 9, 28). Therefore no more sacrifice for sins (Heb. 10, 12).

(4.) And by His own command. He ordains that the *bread* and the *wine* shall be the sole outward memorials of His death—"Till He come" (1 Cor. 11, 26).

## III.—The Participation.

### 1. By the Disciples.

They were the first to receive the Lord's Supper, and to partake of the *bread* and the *wine*, in the presence of, and from the Lord, Himself. He "blessed," or "gave thanks" (ver. 26, and see marginal reference), and "gave to the disciples," saying, "Take, eat; this is My body"; "Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament which is shed" (ver. 26-28). "Do this in remembrance of Me" (St. Luke 22, 19, and 1 Cor. 11, 24).—(See "Bp. Harold Browne.")

### 2. By Christians.

In the times of the Apostles (see Acts 2, 42, and 20, 7) and until now, throughout every Christian country, "The Holy Communion" has been kept in continual remembrance.

It is the duty of every one to *inquire* what it means (Ex. 12, 26), and the *privilege* of all who truly believe in Jesus to *partake* of the memorials.

#### (1.) What then does it mean?

See answers in Church Catechism.

- It is a sacrament—an outward sign of inward grace.
- It is ordained for continual remembrance of the sacrifice and death of Christ.

#### (2.) How do believers partake?

See Church Services.

- They are invited to take and eat in remembrance that Christ died,
- And to feed on Him by faith.

These are the two signs of the Sacrament—like as the bread and wine nourish the body, so, by faith, the Body and Blood of Christ nourish the soul (St. John 6, 53, 56).

*Illustrate:* Suppose father and mother gone to their heavenly home. A letter from them is found among their earthly treasures, addressed to their child with their parting blessing. Is not the love of the child fed by this one outward act and sign of love from the beloved parents?

## APPLICATION.

In a far higher sense do we feed on Christ in the Holy Communion. Our love to Him is not only fed, but He comes into our hearts and dwells there. We remember how much He has done for us; this kindles our gratitude and thanksgiving. He presented Himself as the *one sacrifice* for our sins; we offer ourselves *living sacrifices* unto Him—even a willing service. It is thus we obediently show forth the Lord's death "Till He come."

*Do this in remembrance of Me.*

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 25.

### Subject: DEATH: THE CRUCIFIXION.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ST. MATTHEW.</b>                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>SUNDAY</b> ... ch. 27. 1-10                                          | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE DEATH OF THE CROSS.</b></p> <p>Arrived at the place of execution the condemned were stripped and fastened to the cross, which was usually of the form familiar to us under the name of the Roman cross, but not nearly so high as is commonly represented. The feet of the sufferer were only a foot or two above the ground—a fact of some weight, as showing that Jesus suffered in the midst of His persecutors, and not looking down from above their heads. The body was either nailed or bound by cords to the cross, or in both ways. Our Lord was nailed both by hands and feet, as the prophets had foretold—a method more exquisitely painful at first, though tending to shorten the torture. When the cross was already standing, the sufferer was raised up and affixed to it; but otherwise, as in our Saviour's case, He was fastened to it as it lay upon the ground, and the shock when it was dropped into the hole or socket must have been terrible.—<i>N. T. Hist. (Dr. Smith).</i></p> |
| <b>MONDAY</b> ... " 11-26                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>TUESDAY</b> ... " 27-44                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>WEDNESDAY</b> ... " 45-56                                            | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>WHAT THE CROSS HAS DONE.</b></p> <p>There is hardly a class whose wrongs it did not remedy. It rescued the gladiator, it freed the slave, it protected the captive, it nursed the sick, it elevated woman, it shrouded, as with a halo of sacred innocence, the tender years of a child. In every region of life its ameliorating influence was felt. It changed pity from a vice into a virtue. It elevated poverty from a curse into a beatitude. It ennobled labour . . . It sanctified marriage . . . It revealed the sacred beauty of purity . . . It created the very conception of charity.—<i>Life of Christ (Farrar).</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>THURSDAY</b> ... " 57-66                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>FRIDAY</b> ... <b>PSALM 22.1-31</b>                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>ISAIAH.</b>                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>SATURDAY</b> ... ch. 53. 7-12                                        | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>REFLECTIONS.</b></p> <p>Now look up to the Cross, and what do we see? —“Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!”</p> <p>Look to the Bible, and what do we see?—“It is written.” “Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.”</p> <p>And now, by faith, what do we see?—<i>Atonement for sins, and reconciliation to God for the whole world, by the death of His Son, Jesus Christ.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

Subject: THE CRUCIFIXION.

(ST. MATTHEW 26. and 27.)

Learn—1 John, ch. 1. ver. 7.

BRIEF SUMMARY. { I.—Sorrow.  
II.—Condemnation.  
III.—Death.

INTRODUCTION.—The "Hour" of trial was now come. Separation, mocking, and cruel death lay across our Lord's path. The Supper was ended; the traitor had left the upper room on his fatal errand. All this was known to the Saviour. How then are the moments that remain spent? Look at St. John's Gospel, ch. 14.-17, and what do we find? No selfish thought, but intense concern for His beloved disciples. He is about to leave them; but only to prepare a *Home* for them above (ch. 14. 2). He leaves them in the world, but will *come again and receive them*. It is expedient He should *go away*; but the *Comforter* will be sent unto them. He may be absent from them in body, yet they are united to Him as truly as the branches are to the vine. Sorrows and trials await them; but that is only because of their love to Him, and they will count it joy to suffer with Him. Then "Let not your hearts be troubled," saith the Lord. Why? They believe in God, therefore are they encouraged to believe in Jesus. With such exhortations are they comforted before they leave the supper table; and then in solemn prayer the Son prayeth to the Father (ch. 17.), that they may be "*sanctified through the truth*"; that others may believe "*through their word*"; and that "*they all may be one*," as the Father and the Son "*are one*" (ver. 22). "When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron" (St. John 18. 1).

I.—Sorrow.

(Read ch. 26. 36-46.)

1. In Gethsemane.

- (1.) A place on the western slope of the Mount of Olives. Here had He spent many hours in prayer, alone, and with His disciples. Many of the Parables and sayings spoken here.
- (2.) "Jesus began to be sorrowful" (ver. 37). He led His disciples over the brook Cedron (St. John 18. 1)—*one* absent; *three*, Peter, James, and John, are taken further aside as witnesses of His "*exceeding sorrow*" (ver. 38). These three had seen the transfiguration on another mount, when Moses and Elias spake of His death. (See Lesson No. 15.) Now again our Lord is changed in visage, and bowed down in sorrow, "*even unto death*." Prophecy most truly fulfilled. "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow" (Lam. 1. 12).

2. Why so Sorrowful?

- (1.) Martyrs and many holy men of old have been brave in face of death; so *this could not be all His sorrow*.
- (2.) The disciples are asked to "watch

with Me" (ver. 38). But instead they fall asleep. Is it because of His solitude and coming desertion by the disciples that His sorrow bows Him down? Men have died *alone, deserted, despised*; but *His sorrow* was more than this.

- (3.) *His sorrow* includes all these, and more. The *agony, the bloody sweat, the cry*, "O, My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me except I drink it, Thy will be done" (ver. 42), thrice repeated, refused, rejected; this was His sorrow!
- (4.) Why so great? Because *He was made sin* for us (2 Cor. 5. 21), *wounded* for our transgressions (Isa. 53. 4, 5). The sins of the whole world bowed Him down.  
Sin separates from God; and He who knew no sin is made sin, and at length on the Cross is heard the bitter cry, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?"  
This is the sorrow—*separation from God*.

Lesson: Thank God, the cause of sorrow is removed. Sin is taken away, and all who believe in Jesus are brought nigh through the "blood of His Cross" (Rom. 8. 24, 25; Col. 1. 20; and Eph. 2. 16).

## No. 25.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### II.—Condemnation.

#### 1. The Traitor.

Judas knew well the place where our Lord had gone with the disciples. Often had he listened to the Saviour's words in the Garden of Gethsemane.

It was now beyond eventide (ch. 26. 30). We have seen how much had intervened since all sat down to supper. So at midnight a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people, came out of the city, through the eastern gate (St. Stephen's).

These were not the common people, but some of the chief priests, "captains of the Temple," "officers," "servants," and other officials. *Malchus* was one of the servants of the high priest.

#### 2. The Arrest.

This was effected at midnight. Why? (St. Matt. 26. 5.)

Judas guided the party, gave them a sign, and directed them to "hold Him fast" (ver. 48, 49).

What would be thought of a soldier who had deserted and gone over to the enemy, told all the plans of those whom he had left, and guided a band secretly to get possession of a fortress? Again (suppose this done), what would be thought of his conduct if he went up to the commander to shake hands and pretended to be true and faithful, when this was only a sign to betray him?

How natural are the feelings of Peter (ch. 26. 31; and St. John 18. 10). But how did the Commander, the Great Captain of our salvation, act? (St. Luke 22. 31.) How had He taught? (St. Matt. 5. 44.) Surely at least *Malchus* would not join any longer in wicked acts against the Lord. (See St. John 18. 28.)

This is a great warning. Many, like Dives, think they would believe if they could only have a visit of an angel, or see some great sign, then they would believe: but here is a man upon whom a miracle is wrought, and yet he does not believe.

#### 3. The Trial (ch. 26. 57).

(1.) *Before Annas* (St. John 18. 13).

St. John gives fuller particulars of the trials, and he alone tells us of the circumstances that occurred before *Annas*, the aged high priest, who was now more than 70 years of age. He had been deposed by the Romans, who appointed *Caiaphas*, his son-in-law, high priest in his stead. The officers of the Jews, however, acknowledged the priestly authority of *Annas*, and took Jesus before him in the first instance. Here our Lord was questioned, and struck by the Jewish officials, and then, in the dead of night, He was sent across the court to *Caiaphas*, bound, as a sign of His condemnation (St. John 18. 22-24).

(2.) *Before Caiaphas*.

"They sought false witness against Jesus to put Him to death." (ch. 26. 59.) But they did not agree. Jesus was silent "and held His peace." At last in despair the high priest asked, "Whether Thou art the Christ, the Son

of God"; and to this our Lord replied, "Thou hast said," i.e., "I am" (ver. 64). "Blasphemy," cried the high priest. "What think ye? They answered, "He is guilty of death" (ver. 66).

Note.—It was now, while being led from court to court and passing a noisy crowd, that our Lord heard Peter denying Him with oaths (ver. 72). He and John had followed at a distance. John gained admission to the palace, but Peter stood without. "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter"—a look of sorrow, and of love, which melted Peter's heart (ver. 75).

(3.) *Before the Sanhedrim*.

At the early dawn, when the morning was come (ch. 27. 1), He was led before the Sanhedrim. It was probably now about six o'clock. The full Sanhedrim met (except, probably, *Nicodemus* and *Joseph of Arimathea*), and were determined He should die, although they had no power to inflict death (St. John 18. 31). They bound Him and led Him before *Pontius Pilate*, the Roman governor (ver. 2).

When Judas saw this—that Jesus was handed over, condemned, and to be crucified—filled with remorse and despair he cried, "I have sinned," but was met with scorn. "What is that to us?" There is only one refuge for the sinner, and that is Christ, whom Judas despised. Now in despair he went out and hanged himself (ver. 3-10).

(4.) *Before the Governor* (ver. 11-28).

Every child in the land has learnt the words "Suffered under *Pontius Pilate*" (Apostles' Creed).

The whole council consulted, and bound Jesus and led Him forth, and round His neck, so it is said in early tradition) before *Pilate* (St. Mark 15. 1) into the judgment hall.

And there, after mocking and scourging, and false accusation—against *Pilate's* own judgment, against the expressed wish of his wife, after sending Jesus to Herod, who "set Him at nought" (St. Luke 23. 7-11), but did nothing to relieve *Pilate's* responsibility, he yielded to the cry of the multitude, "Away with this Man," and gave Him up to be crucified.

### III.—Death.

(1.) "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter"; "He was taken from prison and from judgment"; "He made His grave with the wicked" (Isa. 53. 7) how terribly were these words of prophecy fulfilled!

(2.) The Holy Jesus scourged, publicly stripped, hands tied and fastened to a pillar, His back smitten with leathern thongs until the blood gushed out!

(3.) He was made to bear His Cross. Two malefactors chosen to die with Him. They went their way through the crowds who a few days before had shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David"; now He is the despised and rejected of men. Yet there are some who mourn (St. Luke 23. 27).

(4.) He is led as far as *Gethsemane*, and there nailed to the Cross—TO DIE. But listen to some words He hath yet strength to say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

("Reflections," see page 78.)

# St. Matthew's Gospel.

## NOTES OF LESSONS.—No. 26.

### Subject: LIFE: THE RESURRECTION.

| Daily Portions of<br>Illustrative Reading for<br>Teachers and Scholars. | Column for Notes, Illustrations, &c.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ST. MATTHEW.</b><br><b>SUNDAY</b> ... ch. 28. 1-10                   | <b>THE GLORY AND MAJESTY WITH WHICH<br/>CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>MONDAY</b> ... „ 11-20                                               | <p>We are told that there was a great earthquake. We are told that "the Angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and sat upon it." We need not suppose that our blessed Lord needed the help of any angel, when He came forth from the grave. We need not for a moment doubt that He rose again by His own power; but it pleased God that His resurrection should be accompanied and followed by signs and wonders. It seemed good that the earth should shake, and a glorious angel appear, when the Son of God arose from the dead as a conqueror.</p> <p>Let us not fail to see in the manner of our Lord's resurrection, a type and a pledge of the resurrection of His believing people. The grave could not hold Him beyond the appointed time, and it shall not be able to hold them. A glorious angel was a witness of His rising, and glorious angels shall be messengers who shall gather believers when they rise again. He rose with a renewed body, and yet a body, real, true, and material; and so shall His people have a glorious body, and be like Him. "When we see Him we shall be like Him" (1 John 3. 2).—<i>Bishop Ryle.</i></p> |
| <b>JOB.</b><br><b>TUESDAY</b> ... ch. 19. 23-29                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>ROMANS.</b><br><b>WEDNESDAY</b> ... ch. 6. 1-11                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>1 CORINTHIANS.</b><br><b>THURSDAY</b> ... ch. 15. 1-8                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>1 ST. PETER.</b><br><b>FRIDAY</b> ... ch. 1. 1-9                     | <p><b>JOY FOR ALL PEOPLE.</b></p> <p>(1.) The early Christians on Easter morn used to say to each other, "The Lord is risen!" and then in reply, "He is risen indeed."</p> <p>(2.) The apostles were eye-witnesses of His death and burial and resurrection (Acts 2. 32).</p> <p>(3.) Jewish writers bore testimony that Jesus appeared to His disciples after His crucifixion (see <i>Josephus Antiq.</i>, 18. 3, <i>Lesson No. 1</i>).</p> <p>(4.) Our Church now teaches us to say—"By Thy glorious resurrection . . . good Lord deliver us." So that there is a complete chain of evidence of the fact that Christ Jesus rose from the dead. St. Paul teaches that if Christ be not risen, then is our faith vain (1 Cor. 15. 14). We are yet in our sins, for there has been no other deliverance.</p> <p>But thanks be unto God—"Christ is risen from the dead" (1 Cor. 15. 20).</p> <p>"When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers" (<i>Te Deum</i>).</p> <p>"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (St. Luke 2. 14).</p> <p>Therefore may all people sing with JOY,<br/>HALLELUJAH—Amen.</p>                         |
| <b>1 CORINTHIANS.</b><br><b>SATURDAY</b> ... ch. 15. 51-58              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## Subject: THE RESURRECTION.

(ST. MATTHEW 28. 1-10.)

Learn—St. John, ch. 11. ver. 25.

### BRIEF SUMMARY.

- I.—The Truth of the Resurrection.
- II.—The Triumph of the Resurrection.
- III.—The Joy of the Resurrection.

**INTRODUCTION.**—The sad gloom of death sat heavily upon the small band who followed Jesus. Their hearts were filled with dismay, and their faith was blighted. The trial and crucifixion of their Lord had "scattered the flock" (ch. 26. 31), and the boldest of the disciples had even denied Him with an oath. Truly he had "trodden the wine-press alone." "Reproach hath broken my heart," saith the Psalmist; "I looked for some to take pity, but there was none" (Ps. 69. 20); words which had their literal fulfilment on the cross, when, with a cry, He "yielded up the Ghost" (ch. 27. 50), and died of a broken heart. He "poured out His soul unto death" (Isa. 53. 12). We are called upon, in this Lesson, to make a quick transition from the "night of sadness to the morn of gladness," from the feelings of despair to those of joy and triumph, as we follow the disciples on that first "*Easter Morn*" to the tomb where Jesus lay. Our Church recognises this, as the first thought of the day, when in the words in the Easter anthem we say, "Christ, *our Passover*, is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast" (1 Cor. 5. 7). It is a feast of *joy* and of *triumph*, the *truth* of which must be for ever held in thankful remembrance.

### I.—The Truth of the Resurrection.

#### (a.) Christ's Burial.

##### 1. Circumstances.

- (1.) The Church teaches us the importance of this *fact*.  
"By Thy death and burial, good Lord deliver us" (*Litany*).
- (2.) Had the Roman custom been adopted our Lord's body would have been left hanging on the tree, to be devoured by the vultures or ravens or wild animals of the country. It was a *curved death* to be crucified, and decent burial was not thought of by the Romans.
- (3.) Jewish tradition and the Mosaic law provided differently (see Deut. 21. 22, 23), and kind hearts and loving hands were, near, and had enough courage, now that *He was dead*, to go unto Pilate, and beg the body of Jesus.

##### 2. The Two Rulers.

- (1.) *Joseph of Arimathea*—the same who probably had given up his room to Jesus and His disciples the preceding night, in which they prepared the Passover. He was a follower of Jesus (St. John 19. 38), but *secretly*, for fear of the Jews. He was a rich man, and a member of the Sanhedrim, and could go into the governor's house freely, which he now does *boldly* (St. Mark 15. 43).

He buys fine linen in which to wrap the body of Jesus, and gives up his new tomb, which had been hewn out of a rock, close to Golgotha, and there he buries our Lord.

- (2.) *Nicodemus*—the same who came to Jesus by night (St. John 3. 1 and 19. 39). He was also near at hand, and had brought 100 lbs. weight of spices for the burial.

This was a costly offering, which he freely gave in loving devotion.

These two men had not consented to the crucifixion of our Lord, when the Council had hastily met in the morning to raise a charge against Him (St. Luke 23. 51).

##### 3. Other Mourners.

"There stood by the Cross of Jesus His mother!" (St. John 19. 25-27), also the beloved disciple (John), and the two Marys, who "beheld how His body was laid" (St. Luke 23. 55).

##### 4. The Time of Burial.

- (1.) "When the even was come" (ch. 23. 37), on the day which we now call GOOD FRIDAY, the day before the Jewish Sabbath (St. John 19. 31), His body was taken down and buried in the tomb hewn out of a rock.
- (2.) "It was about the sixth hour" (our mid-day) when our Lord was crucified, and at the ninth hour (our 3 o'clock), when He cried with a loud voice and died on the Cross for sinful man."

## No. 26.—Notes of Lessons on St. Matthew's Gospel.

### (b.) Christ's Resurrection.

#### 1. Jewish Precautions.

- (1.) The Jews had triumphed, so they thought, and every outward circumstance was in their favour. Yet they were not comfortable.
- (2.) True, Jesus was in the tomb, but they remembered words of His which troubled them. Had He not said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again"? (see ch. 12. 39 and 27. 63.)
- (3.) The priests and rulers understood this parabolic form of speech to refer to Himself, and they argued—"Had He not raised Lazarus and others from the dead, in some mysterious manner? We must take care that no possible opportunity be given to His disciples to come near the tomb, or do anything with His body."

#### 2. Roman Security.

- (1.) The chief priests and others go again to Pilate, and represent the whole case to him, urging that no effort must be spared to secure the tomb (ch. 27. 62-66).
- (2.) Pilate's seal is put to the stone. A Roman watch is set, who are to keep guard by night and by day.  
And now, thought they, all is safe. They may, at last, enjoy in peace the Passover feast, having got rid of Him, whom they mocked and scourged and spit upon, and smote upon the head (ch. 27. 30, 31).

#### 3. The End of the Sabbath (ver. 1).

- (1.) How the scene is changed! The Roman soldiers shake with fear, and become like dead men (ver. 4).  
They had watched over the Friday night and the Jewish Sabbath, and Jesus, the "despised and rejected of men," was still safe in the tomb. But there was a great earthquake (ver. 2), and these brave men, who feared not death in the day of battle, trembled now at the sight of the angel of the Lord, who descended from heaven, with face like lightning, and garments white as snow (ver. 3).
- (2.) "The third day He rose again from the dead" (*Apostles' Creed*).  
The Jews reckoned any part of a day as one day.—See "Bishop Kyle."

## II.—The Triumph of the Resurrection.

### 1. Triumph over His Enemies.

- (1.) When the watch had recovered sufficiently from their state of fear and trembling, they went into the city to tell the wonderful news (ver. 11).
- (2.) The priests and elders again take counsel. Their worst fears are now realised. What is to be done?  
Just what every sinner does who repents not of his sins. *One sin leads to sin!*  
They first crucify Jesus; then they bribe the soldiers to tell lies, so that they may deceive the people, and not be covered with disgrace (ver. 11-15).

### 2. Triumph over Death.

- (1.) We need to go back to the first sin to see what it brought into the world. The punishment of sin was death (Gen. 2. 17 and 3. 15).
- (2.) Now the work which our Lord came on earth to accomplish was to pay the full penalty due on account of sin. He came to die for the sins of the whole world, and this He did on the Cross.
- (3.) But death was the punishment for sin, and He who could take away the cause of death must also show that He could conquer death itself.
- (4.) Hence St. Paul says when our Lord arose from the dead He took from death its sting, and from the grave its victory, and became the first-fruits of them that slept and triumphed over death (1 Cor. 15. 54-57).

### 3. Triumph over Satan.

- (1.) "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."  
The grave could not keep Jesus (Acts 2. 24), or Satan would then have triumphed (1 Cor. 15. 17), and the death of Christ would have been in vain.
- (2.) But now, in Christ Jesus, there is no condemnation (Rom. 8. 1); those who believe in Him are justified, acquitted (Rom. 4. 25), and are to "reckon themselves dead to sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6. 11).
- (3.) Hence the work of Satan is defeated, for the justice of God is satisfied, and the guilty sinner is brought nigh through the blood of Jesus. This is just the reverse of the evil work of Satan which drove man away from the presence of God (Gen. 3. 24).  
"Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15. 57).

## III.—The Joys of the Resurrection.

### 1. Joy of the Early Visitors (ver. 1).

- (1.) "Very early in the morning" (St. Mark 16. 2 and St. Luke 24. 1), "when it was yet dark" (St. John 20. 1), came a small group of women—the last at the Cross and the first at the Sepulchre. They are the first who hear the joyful sound—"HE IS RISEN" (ver. 6).
- (2.) One discovers the stone is rolled away, and runs to tell Peter and John (St. John 20. 2); others enter into the sepulchre and see the empty tomb, guarded by the heavenly visitors, who spake comforting words to them (ver. 5, 6).
- (3.) Our Lord revealed Himself to Mary Magdalen while the disciples had gone to their home (St. John 20. 10). She remained behind, and there met her risen Lord, who called her by her name, "Mary." He appeared again to the disciples, saying, "All hail!" and especially to Peter (see St. Luke 24. 34), to whom He had sent a message (St. Mark 16. 7).  
Let us be told "they knew not the Scriptures" (St. John 2. 9), and they therefore could not realise the fulness of the joy until the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2. 31-38).

### 2. Joy for All People. (See page 81.)

# HINTS FOR BIBLE TEACHING AT HOME.

---

## 1. With the Young.

- (1.) **Begin early.**—Use any device to accustom a child to handle reverently the Word of God, and to learn passages and texts by heart. But remember *one thing*—never let this be done as a *task* or as a *punishment*.

An infant, just beginning to learn the letters, may be happily taught by the use of its “play-bricks” or “picture-letters,” to form sacred words. Simple Scripture lessons may then be taught, which will never be forgotten in after years.

- (2.) **Scripture Pictures.**—Provide a liberal supply of these for little children. They are taught a great deal more easily and naturally by the *eye* than by the *ear*. Many a child has learnt the outline of Scripture-story, almost self-taught, in this way.

Keep a reserve of Scripture pictures and special toys for Sundays. This will help to make the day joyful and happy to the little ones.

## 2. When they can Read.

- (1.) As the children grow older and can read and write, then comes in the use of *pen*, *pencil*, and *paper*. Happy hours may be rightly spent (a) in drawing a Scripture illustration; (b) in composing Scripture clocks, or other devices with texts; (c) in reading the books of the Bible to find out special objects of interest. The birds and animals, the flowers and trees, the battles and events in the world's history; in fact an endless variety is legitimately presented in the Bible to suit the taste of every child. They may be taught to take a delight in searching through the Scriptures, and in doing so none can doubt but that the “Written Word” will create its impress on the child's mind.
- (2.) Take one example. Suppose children at the seaside, away from their books. It is not always easy to know how to occupy a Sunday or a wet day profitably; but start them off in a search through the Book of Psalms, for instance, to look for the passages in which the Psalmist describes the *sea*, and the children will be greatly interested.

## 3. With Advanced Children.

The early training may now be expected to bear fruit. Bible study will now maintain its hold on the children, and by God's blessing it may be earnestly hoped that those so taught will speedily become teachers in Sunday-schools and workers for God as opportunity presents itself.



.

.

.

.

.



